

# NOTES ON JAMES

## VOLUME 1

### CHAPTERS 1-5

## JAMES 1-5

### I. Theme: Blessed are the balanced.

Chapter 1--In temptation.

Chapter 2--In Faith.

Chapter 3--In speech.

Chapter 4--In life.

Chapter 5--In action.

Blessed are they who are balanced in every area of life. There is much talk about balanced diets, balanced budgets, and balanced bank accounts. Therefore, we need to be balanced in temptation, faith, speech, life, and action.

### II. Introduction.

#### CHAPTER 1:

##### A. Writer V. 1

V. 1

1. "James" = Half brother of our Lord is the human instrument (II Peter 1:21) used to pen down this epistle (Mat. 13:55-57; Judas is also a half brother who penned down the book of Jude; note they were offended in Jesus because they did not believe Jesus was the Messiah; John 7:3-6); after the cross and resurrection Jesus appeared to him (I Cor. 15:7) and he was saved, we know not when or the circumstances but he was in the group in the upper room on Pentecost (Acts 1:14); Paul speaks of James in Gal. 1:19; Acts 12:17 shows his prominence in the church in Jerusalem (James, John's brother, was killed in Acts 12:1-2); something transpired between Mat. 13 and Acts 12 for James now believes and saw the resurrected Lord. (I Cor. 15:7)

2. "A servant" = a slave; a bondsman; one who is in a permanent relation of servitude to another--his will altogether consumed in the will of the other; note James did not refer to himself as Jesus' brother but a servant "of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" = refers to God the Father, the first person of the trinity and the Lord who is Jesus the Christ (Messiah) who also is the second person of the trinity. There are 4 implications to this title.

A. Absolute obedience = a slave knows no law but his master's word; he has no rights of his own.

B. Absolute humility = one who thinks not of his privileges but of his duties; thinks not

of his rights but his obligations.

C. Absolute loyalty = has no interest of his own.

D. Glad to call himself a servant = because he was following in a great path:

1) Moses. (I Kings 8:53)

2) Caleb and Joshua, as well. (Num. 14:24)

3) Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (Deut. 9:29)

4) Job. (Job 1:8)

5) Isaiah. (Isa. 20:3)

6) This is a good crowd to be labeled with. The Lord is not looking for people who give part time service, part time talent, or make a part time effort. No. He is looking for those who give all (Luke 14:33), a bondsman. The master-slave relationship is a two way street--the master provides if the slave performs. That is absolute obedience.

#### B. Written to:

3. "The twelve tribes scattered abroad" = this is not talking about Jews dispensed in captivity but Christian Jews of the 12 tribes; in Acts 1:8 Jesus, just before He ascended, commissioned the Apostles, nucleus of the NT church (I Cor. 12:28), to go carry the gospel unto the uttermost part of the earth; instead they settled in Jerusalem and God sent heavy persecution upon them which caused the Jewish Christians to scatter (disperse) to do what the Lord had told them to do:

A. In Acts 4, Peter was forbidden to preach in Jesus name.

B. In Acts 5, the apostles were put in prison.

C. In Acts 7, Stephen was stoned for his message cut them to the heart.

D. In Acts 8, Paul made havoc of the church.

E. In Acts 12, James the apostle and the brother of John was beheaded.

F. In Acts 13, opposition from the Jews caused Paul and Barnabas to turn to the Gentiles.

4. It is hard to know for sure when this epistle was written. Some believe it was somewhere around 45-48 AD. The language does not reveal Gentiles had yet been saved in great number. Some others think it was written about 60 AD. Whenever it was written, it was to Jewish Christians of the 12 tribes scattered--this corresponds to true Israel--spiritual Jews through Jesus Christ. (Rom. 4:13; 2:28-29; 15:4)

5. "Greeting" = to be cheerful; to rejoice; to joy; implies he wished their welfare.

### **III. Blessed are the balanced in temptation. V. 2-27**

#### A. Right reaction to temptation. V. 2-12

V. 2

1. "Brethren" = from the same womb--the womb of Holy Ghost conviction; therefore, he is referring to the saved; he used a form of the word "brother" 19 times--he wants to tell us

something; he said "my brethren" which means James was saved the same way every saint is saved--by grace through faith in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. "Count" = consider; reckon; the tense is point action--do it now, once for all.

3. "Joy" = cheerfulness; gladness; delight; rejoicing.

4. "All joy" = whole joy; unmixed joy; not just "some joy" along with much grief; Rom. 5:3 says "glory in tribulation" which means to give a shout of triumph.

5. "When" = means tribulation will come, not if. (II Tim. 3:12; Acts 14:22)

6. "Fall" = to fall into something that is all around--it is a picture of being surrounded by trials; never intentional but just falling into them because you cannot avoid them.

7. "Temptations" = here the word is used to mean testing by God under trial, not solicitation to evil; in verses 13-14 this word means solicitation to evil but not here; described as "divers" = various in character.

8. Why should we count it all joy? Because temptation may be transformed into a ministry of spiritual blessing. (verses 3-4)

## V. 3

1. "Knowing" = to know by experience; James was speaking from experience which is the only way of getting a view of trials as "all joy."

2. "Trying" = means by which a man is tested and proved.

3. "Faith" = refers to saving faith the Lord gives which enables you to exercise it, thus saying "I am saved;" the trying of that faith, proves if it is genuine; example: the stony ground hearer's faith--they said they had--proved to have no genuine faith when tested (Luke 8:14); you can test a nickel or quarter to see if it is silver and not--when tested it proved it was genuine or not genuine.

4. "Worketh patience" = the result of trying your faith.

A. "Worketh" = to achieve an end result in patience, the tense "eth" is a continuous habitual lifestyle.

B. "Patience" = cheerful endurance; steadfast endurance; the ability to turn testing into glory; the quality of an individual who does not surrender to circumstance nor succumb to trials but has his spiritual eyes set on a goal and continues; Jesus set His face steadfast toward the cross (Heb. 12:2); patience is not being run over or doing nothing about your condition or not necessarily being silent--that may be laziness; James 5:11 speaks of the patience of Job yet he complained and spoke up.

## V. 4

1. "But" = contrast.

2. "Let" = imperative command; you let the trials keep on working until patience is "perfect" = complete; reaching maturity as a Christian--the goal of patience.

3. "And be entire" = complete in every part.

4. "Perfect" and "entire" = these words together mean perfected all over.

5. "Wanting nothing" = lacking not one thing; go through the testing; not to be left

behind in the race of life--wanting nothing.

6. Therefore you can "count it all joy" if you get hold of this truth.

#### V. 5

1. "Any of you" = "him" = the brethren; the saved; the saints.

2. "Lack" = same word as "wanting" in verse 4; to be destitute of.

3. "Wisdom" = insight; the knowledge of how to regulate one's relationship with God or how to find God's will and do it.

4. "Let him ask of God" = refers to praying to God--the one who giveth to all.

5. "Liberally" = bountifully; abundantly; simply; sincerely; generous; the husband says to his wife, "How little money do you want?" "but God says how much--it shall be given him" = the thought here is the same as the thought behind Isa. 55:1; it is to be had for the asking--wisdom is what the context is referring too. (Luke 11:9)

6. "Upbraideth not" = does not scold you for asking; an evil habit of giving stinging words along with money is usually practiced with man; but God will not revile you for asking for wisdom if your motive is right.

#### V. 6

1. "But" = reveals a contrast; how to ask for wisdom.

2. "Ask in faith" = genuine commitment; trust; belief in God and personal reliance on Him.

3. "Nothing wavering" = the negative way of saying, "in faith" = the exact opposite is "wavering" = hesitate; withdraw; vivid picture of internal doubt; Abraham is an example of this in Rom. 4:20.

4. "He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed" = this is a picture of the restless swaying to and fro of the surface of the water of the sea, blown upon by shifting winds; "tossed" = to agitate; to breeze up; comes from a word which means "billows or fire fan."

#### V. 7

1. Verses 7 and 8 go together for they both describe the man in verse 6 that ask "wavering."

2. "Let not that man think that he shall receive anything from the Lord" = not even think, or suppose, or imagine he will receive anything from the Lord.

3. "Lord" = supreme in authority; Master; ruler; owner; boss; a title used many times for Jesus Christ.

#### V. 8

1. "Double minded" = refer to man "wavering" in verse 6; means two spirited; vacillating between opinions--can't make up one's mind; that is the way natural man is:

2. "Unstable" = unsettled; unsteady; fickle; staggering; reeling like a drunken man--weaving side to side getting no where; that man can't be depended on.

#### V. 9

1. This is a paradox--seemingly absurd, yet true in fact.
2. "Low degree" = speaking of physical conditions and humble circumstances; some in the early church were slaves and destitute of earthly goods.
3. "Exalted" = elevated; exalted position as "fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." (Eph. 2:19)
4. "Rejoice" = to glory; to boast; the tense is a habitual continuous action.
5. Poor yet rich. An example is the church at Smyrna--the poor rich church. (Rev. 2:9)

#### V. 10

1. "But" = reveals contrast; refers to the rich rejoicing--"in that he is made low."
2. "Rich" = refers to the wealthy; abounding in material resources; the person the world considers to be in the upper class of society.
3. "Is made low" = is brought low to the place where his trust is in Christ instead of in riches; people can not earn a position in the family of God through either poverty or wealth; this means he becomes so poor in spirit that he makes a complete commitment to Christ and is saved, therefore he rejoices; his riches may be gone physically or at least he does not think highly of them anymore--forsake all. (Luke 14:33)
4. "Because" = gives the reason why it is best to make a complete commitment to Christ, "for as the flower of the grass he shall pass away" = not only will all things of this world pass away but man himself shall pass away (Job 14:1-2; James 4:14); do not put your trust in riches in times of inflation, depression, world crisis, end time, and etc.
5. The cross of Christ lifts up the poor and brings down the high. The ground is level around the cross. Accept the providence of God with thanksgiving for there are no accidents with God. (Rom. 8:28)

#### V. 11

1. This verse further explains verse 10.
2. The mention of quickly withering grass and flowers to illustrate the transitory nature of life was a figure the readers of James' letter could understand. In that part of the world, the brief season of green grass and colorful flowers is often followed by a time of great heat which procures a sudden transformation from beauty to drabness.
3. "Burning heat" = refers to the heat of the sun.
4. "Withereth" = to waste away.
5. "Falleth" = to perish; to fall powerless to the ground.
6. "Grace" = refers to the goodly appearance, shapeliness, beauty, and comeliness of the flower; this is not the same Greek word translated "grace" (unmerited favor) of God.
7. "Fashion of it perisheth" = to render useless; its beauty disappears.

8. "So also shall the rich man fade away in his ways" = "fade away" means to have a miserable end; refers to his splendor, and all on which he prided himself shall vanish.

9. It is a possibility that James had his eye on the passage in Isa. 40:6-8.

## V. 12

1. "Blessed" = spiritually prosperous, supremely blest; O happy is the man!

2. "Man" = used generically of a group of both men and women.

3. "Endureth" = to stay under; to persevere; the tense is a continual habitual lifestyle.

4. "Temptation" = here the word is used to mean testing by God under trial, not solicitation to evil; in verses 13-14 this word means solicitation to evil but not here.

5. "For he is tried" = because having been tested he is proven and accepted as genuine, then "he shall receive the crown of life" = life itself is the crown--life now and life then--eternal life.

6. "Crown" = a mark of royalty or exalted rank; there are four thoughts of a crown in the ancient world:

A. A crown of flowers was worn at times of joy.

B. A crown was a mark of royalty, worn by those in authority.

C. A crown of laurel leaves was a victor's crown in games--the prize the athletes coveted above all.

D. A crown was a mark of honor and of dignity.

E. The Christian has joy no other man can have, royalty other men will never realize, victory others cannot win, and has new dignity, for he is ever conscious that God gave him worth, in the life and death of Jesus.

F. The crown which is life is the new kind of living which is life indeed--now and here after. (Rev. 2:10)

G. This crown of life is that "which the Lord has promised to them that love him" = this is agape love, the God kind of love; that love is only present when it is inside a person, and that does not completely happen until one is saved (Rom. 5:5); we love him because He first loved us. (I John 4:19)

7. May we have the right reaction to temptation--testings. Be assured that for patient enduring there is a final crowning.

## B. The origin of temptation. V. 13-18

## V. 13

1. Temptation is a broad word. It denotes anything that will try or test the reality of our profession of faith by afflictions, persecutions, sickness, tribulations, and trials. It may also be applied to direct solicitation to sin or evil. James had used temptation to apply to testing or trying of one's faith. (V. 12; note: "tried") Like Peter said in I Peter 1:6-8. This comes from God. Example: Abraham in Gen. 22:1.

2. But now James turn to another usage of temptation--solicitation to evil and this type of temptation is never of God--the origin is not of God.

3. "Let no man say" = that God is the origin of sin.
4. "Let" = the Greek construction prohibits such a habit--blaming God for being tempted to sin; it is a wicked and weak individual who blames God for being tempted to sin; man's nature is to blame someone else; example: Adam in trying to blame Eve for his sin was really blaming God. Gen. 3:12.
5. "For" = case shows origin; the reason it is not of God "for God cannot be tempted with evil:"
  - A. There is nothing in Him that has a tendency to do wrong.
  - B. There is nothing presented from without to induce Him to do wrong.
    - 1) There is no evil passion to be gratified as there is in man.
    - 2) There is no want of power so that an enticement could be presented to seek what He has not.
    - 3) There is no want of wealth, for He has infinite resources and all that there is, or can be, is His.
    - 4) There is no want of happiness, that He should seek happiness in sources which are not now in His possession.
  - C. There is nothing then that could be presented before His Divine mind to entice Him to do evil. (Mat. 4:1)
6. Therefore "neither tempteth he any man" = this means that He places nothing before any human being with a view to entice him to do wrong.
7. Therefore, the origin of this kind of temptation is not of God.

#### V. 14

1. "But" = shows a contrast--"every man is tempted" = you can put a period there.
2. Where is the origin of this kind of temptation?--"when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed" = the origin of temptation to evil is in man himself.
3. Eph. 2:1-3 gives the characteristics of all mankind before saved. Note verse 2, "spirit" = prince; Satan; "disobedience refers to unbelievers; "worketh" is from a word where we get our word "energy" = to energize; the spirit that energizes the children of disobedience; the origin is in each of us, and we do not need to pass the buck.
4. "Enticed" = to catch by bait.
5. "Drawn away" = to lure forth.
6. "Enticed" and "drawn away" is a metaphor taken from hunting and fishing as game is lured from its hiding place by a baited trap or hook; so man is lured from the safety of self-restraint to sin and entrapment.

#### V. 15

1. "Conceived" = a picture of the union of the male seed and female egg.
2. First "bringeth forth" = to give birth to; to produce an offspring--sin.
3. "Sin" = to miss the mark; to miss or wander from the path of righteousness and honor;

to do or go wrong.

4. First "it" = lust.

5. Second "it" = sin.

6. "Finished" = full grown; refers to completeness of parts or functions as opposed to its complete development, like the winged moth in contrast with a caterpillar or cocoon.

7. Sin, when brought forth is fully equipped for its career--thus "bringeth forth death" = death of the body with the implied idea of future misery in hell unless sin is forgiven.

8. Second "bringeth forth" = from a different Greek word than the first time it is used; it is a medical word that speaks of an abnormal birth, in this case the offspring is "death."

9. This reveals to us that the origin of temptation to evil is not God but "lust" that is within us.

10. A list of the steps of temptation to evil in verses 14-15.

A. Enticed by his own lust.

B. Conception takes place.

C. Sin is brought forth.

D. When it is finished--full grown.

E. Brings forth death.

#### C. Reveals that good and perfect gifts are what we receive from the Father. V. 16-18

V. 16

1. "Beloved" = esteemed; dear; worthy of love because of the Lord (saved).

2. "Brethren" = from the same womb--the womb of Holy Ghost conviction; therefore, James is referring to the saved.

3. "My" = James who referred to himself as being saved the same way every saint is saved--by grace through faith in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. "Err" = to be led astray; be deceived; James is saying do not be led astray or deceived into thinking that God is the one who tempts you to evil.

5. The way of sin is to deceive and to kill and the devil is a master of deception and blinding men's eyes about sin. (Jer. 17:9; II Cor. 4:4)

V 17

1. "Every" = each and every thing you receive.

2. First "gift" = speaks of the act of giving; second "gift" = speaks of the actual gift or the thing given.

3. "Good" = benevolent; kind; just; generous.

4. "Perfect" = complete; entire; indicates there is nothing even apparently wanting or lacking to complete it; speaks of His benevolent giving of His entire complete gifts--of every one, to numerous to name.



5. "Is from above" = from heaven. (John 3:27)
6. "Cometh down" = expanding and explaining "from above."
7. "From the Father of lights" = speaks of the heavenly bodies of which God is the Father, in that He is their Creator.
8. "With whom" = referring to God.
9. "No variableness" = no variation; no change; Mal. 3:6 states, "For I am the Lord, I change not."
10. "Neither shadow of turning" = refers to the fact that a shadow is not cast by God turning; comparing God and the sun--the sun has variations and does cast a shadow but not God.

#### V. 18

1. "His" = "he" = God.
2. "Of his own will" = to have a purpose; God acted deliberately.
3. "Begot" = same word as the first "bringeth forth" in verse 15; the recurrence of it here points to the connecting of thought; the offspring of sin has been shown to be death--God, too, who is both Father and Mother has His offspring--"us."
4. "Word of truth" = refers to the gospel message of salvation marked by truth. (I Cor. 1:18; Rom. 1:16)
5. "That we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" = the image is taken from the wave sheaf in the feast of firstfruits--the earnest of the cross to follow. (Rom. 8:29 which is right after 8:28.)

D. The best antidote to temptation. V. 19-27 An antidote is something taken that overcomes. An example: an antidote for some poison is something that counter-acts the poison.

#### V. 19

1. "Beloved" = esteemed; dear; worthy of love because of the Lord (saved).
2. "Brethren" = from the same womb--the womb of Holy Ghost conviction; therefore, James is referring to the saved.
3. "My" = James who referred to himself as being saved the same way every saint is saved--by grace through faith in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.
4. "Wherefore" = in view of what has been said.
  - A. V. 14a: Every man is tempted.
  - B. V. 16: Do not err--do not be misled.
  - C. V. 18: Begotten of Him.
  - D. In view of that: "let every man" = let every human being.
5. "Be swift to hear:
  - A. "Swift" = prompt and ready.

B. "Hear" = more than just physical hearing; refers to hearing with a spiritual ear--to hear with understanding.

C. Verse 18 said He begat or brought us forth by the word of truth; therefore, we are urged to have a quick and attentive ear to hear the word of truth.

6. "Slow to speak" = means slow to begin speaking not slow while speaking; God gave us two ears and one mouth--therefore, someone said He must have intended us to listen twice as much as we speak; we need to put our mind in gear before we put our mouth in action--if we did, we would say more things that would come out right.

7. "Slow to wrath:"

A. "Wrath" = anger; a violent emotion, movement, or agitation of soul.

B. "Slow to wrath" = we are to govern and restrain our temper by aid of the Holy Spirit which is part of the fruit of the Spirit--temperance (Gal. 5:23; Pro. 16:32)

C. The idea here is not that we should be slow to wrath as a general habit of mind, which we ought to be, but context refers to reception of truth. We should come to the investigation of truth with a calm mind and an undisturbed spirit. He whose mind is excited and enraged is not in a condition to see the value of truth or to weigh the evidence of truth.

8. Also in context "slow to speak" means that slowness to speak up when angry, will tend to curb the anger.

## V. 20

1. This verse gives the reason for being slow to wrath. (verse 19)

2. "Wrath" = anger; a violent emotion, movement, or agitation of the soul; implies a continuing resentment that does not demonstrate righteousness.

3. "Worketh" = to perform, accomplish, achieve; the tense indicates a continuous habitual life style; negated by "not."

4. "Righteousness of God" = the meaning of this verse does not mean that our wrath will make God either more or less righteous; but its tendency is not to produce that upright course of life, and love of truth which God requires; a man is never sure of doing right under the influence of excited feelings--he may do that which in the highest sense is wrong, and which he will regret all his life; the meaning of this verse is that wrath in the mind of man will not have any tendency to make him righteous.

5. A good antidote to wrath is found in Eph 4:26, but not many can practice that because flesh enters in.

## V. 21

1. "Wherefore" = in view of the facts just stated in verses 19-20.

2. "Lay apart" = to put off or aside or away; this is a metaphor of removing clothing; translated "lay aside" in Heb. 12:1.

3. "Filthiness" = lustful iniquity; applied to evil conduct considered as disgusting or offensive; speaks of wickedness as moral defilement.

4. "Naughtiness" = wickedness; also an evil habit of mind; described by "superfluity" = overflow; speaks of growth and overflow of wickedness, not simply an excess because

naughtiness or wickedness in the smallest measure is already excess; refers to the wickedness remaining over in the Christian from his state prior to being saved--may be a new creature but still have your flesh; "lay apart" applies to this as well and it is like taking off an old filthy garment.

5. "Receive" = to take hold of; to take up; James is referring to the brethren. (verse 19)

6. "With meekness" = mildness; gentleness; humility; part of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23a); means having a teachable spirit--that attitude of spirit in which we accept God's dealings with us as good and do not reject it.

7. What are we to receive? "the engrafted word" = implanted; inborn; refers to having Christ (the Word) implanted in you when saved--born again; receive what has been implanted in you; example: once a graft is complete in a tree it is a part of the main tree. Example: when one receives a heart transplant, it is already inside, but sometimes a body will not receive it but rejects it and that person has to take medicine to keep the body from rejecting the transplanted heart; this is not talking about losing your salvation because you can't. but you can yield to the flesh when you ought to be yielding to the Lordship of Christ--the engrafted Word which:

8. "Is able to save your souls" = "save" = the tense indicates a continuous habitual lifestyle; therefore, this is not referring to justification of the spirit but sanctification of the soul--being saved daily from the power of sin.

9. Sanctification is an on-going process and is defined as the walk of progression toward perfection which will be gained at the first resurrection.

## V. 22

1. "But" = introduces a contrast between a doer and a hearer.

2. "Ye" = refers to the brethren--the saints.

3. "Doers" = performers; implies obedience; to act upon the "word" = the word of God.

4. "Be" = the tense says keep on becoming doers--signifies there is to be a growing process.

5. "Not hearers only" = refers to physical hearing and also to spiritual hearing (Mat. 13:9); it is not enough to just listen to the gospel (Word), but we need to obey what we hear; for when one only hears and fails to obey, he is "deceiving your own selves" = means to be led astray by false reasoning--they would imagine that was all which was required was to hear, whereas the main thing was that they should be obedient--heed.

## V. 23

1. "For" = because.

2. "If any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer" = hears but does not obey.

3. "He" = "man" = "his" = the Greek word means human beings--male and female.

4. "Like" = in the same manner.

5. "Unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:"

A. "Beholding" = to glance casually.

B. "Glass" = mirror; the Greek refers to polished brass--the looking glass of the women

in OT time.

#### V. 24

1. "Beholdeth" = while looking in the mirror he sees his face is dirty but "he goeth his way;" he sees his true appearance.
2. "Straightway" = immediately.
3. "Forgetteth" = forgets what he looked like--did not retain a distinct impression of himself after he looked in the mirror; when looking in a mirror, we can see all the defects and blemishes of our person, but when turned away, that is out of sight, out of mind; when unseen it gives no uneasiness, and even if capable of correction, we take no pains to remove it--therefore, "forgetteth what manner of man he was."
4. Application: A Christian glance at his Bible, sees sin in his life and goes on his way without confession and repenting. That is self-deception for he thinks he has bettered himself spiritually by looking in the Bible when actually he harms himself because he did not become a doer--did not obey; to whom much is given much is required. (Luke 12:48b)

#### V. 25

1. "But" = introduces another contrast.
2. "Whoso" = whoever; male or female.
3. "Looketh" = to stoop down nearby anything; to gaze carefully, not casual glance, but peer into with the idea of eagerness, concentration, and steadiness and then does (obeys) what it says.
4. "The perfect law of liberty" = refers to the law of God or His will, however made known as the correct standard of conduct; refers to the word of truth.
  - A. It is called "the perfect law," as being wholly free from all defects, being just such as a law ought to be. (Psa. 19:7)
  - B. It is called the "Law of liberty," or freedom, because it is a law producing freedom from the servitude of sinful passions and lusts. (Psa. 119:45)
5. "And continueth *therein*" = he must not merely look at the law or see what he is by comparing himself with its requirements, but he must yield steady obedience to it. (John 8:30-32)
6. "Being not a forgetful hearer (as stated in verse 24), but a doer of the work" = acts in which a man proves his genuineness and his faith.
7. "This man shall be blessed in his deed" = "blessed" means balanced and spiritually prosperous; "deed" refers to his action and performance.
8. The Word (verse 22) produces spiritual liberty, thus being a doer of the work--not merely listening and talking but working--action.

#### V. 26

1. Verses 26 and 27 run a test to see if a man is a doer of the word and work.

2. "Seem to be religious" = in this context it refers to attendance at worship services and to other observances of religion, such as prayer, almsgiving, and fasting; refers to religious worship in its external observances; religious exercise; outward practice of religion; the Bible nowhere calls the Christian faith "a religion"--it is a miracle, a new birth, a divine life.
3. James says if any man "seem" religious = supposes or thinks, imagines, then let him prove it by the life he lives.
4. "Bridleth" = to lead by bridle; to hold in check; restrain; negated by "not;" this refers to self control by having a bridled tongue; a bridle controls a horse and we need to control our tongue; this is a repeat of verse 19 "slow to speak"--antidote for temptation.
5. "Deceiveth" = mislead by false reasoning; the tense refers to a continuous habitual lifestyle; note: "deceiveth his own heart" = "heart" refers to the center and seat of spiritual life.
6. Result: "this man's religion *is* vain" = empty; profitless; fruitless; devoid of truth, success, and result; the man who practices his religion of prayer, almsgiving, fasting, and assembling but fails to control his speech in everyday life deceives himself and his religion is vain--futile.
7. We have too much talkie-talkie and not enough walkie-walkie. Walk worthy of your calling in the area of the tongue. (Eph. 4:1)

## V. 27

1. "Pure religion" = that which is genuine and sincere, or which is free from any improper mixture.
2. "Undefiled" = not polluted; free from that by which the nature of a thing is deformed and debased.
3. "Before God and the Father" = before God who is our Father; refers to that which God sees as pure and undefiled; believers should be more concerned about God's approval than man's.
4. "Is this" = this is religion such as God approves.
  - A. "To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction:"
    - 1) "Visit" = means more than just drive over to say hello; means to look upon in order to help or to benefit; to be ready to aid them; to pray for them; speaks of sacrificial care for those who are in need.
    - 2) "The fatherless" = orphaned; those without a guardian; could apply to the lost.
    - 3) "Widows" = one whose husband has died; Paul spoke of "widows indeed" in I Tim. 5:3 which conveys the idea of one in distressed circumstances; such widows as well as orphans were not provided for in ancient society--they had no family to care for them.
    - 4) To do so is to imitate God. (Psa. 68:5)
  - B. "To keep himself unspotted from the world:"
    - 1) "Keep" = to guard; to attend to carefully; means to guard against conformity to the world (Rom. 12:2); the tense in the Greek is continuous habitual action--one can never let his guard down for believers are in a world of people who are enemies of God.

2) Jesus did not pray that they should be removed from the world but kept from the evil one. (John 17:15)

3) "Unspotted" = free from sin and vices (I John 3:2-3)

5. Good antidote for temptation:

- swift to hear. V. 19
- slow to speak. V. 19
- slow to wrath. V. 19
- lay apart. V. 21
- receive the engrafted word. V. 21
- be a doer of the word (V. 22) and a doer of the work. (V. 25)

6. May we be balanced in temptation.

## **CHAPTER 2:**

### **IV. Blessed are the balanced in faith. V. 1-26**

Everybody has faith of some kind. The question is what kind is it? Example: The atheist has faith = "I believe there is no God." The faith one has can be good or bad. In this chapter there are four kinds of faith we will look at.

- Sinning faith. V. 1-13
- Saying faith. V. 14-18
- Shaking faith. V. 19-20
- Saving faith. V. 21-26

#### **A. Sinning faith. V. 1-13**

##### **1. It is sin against the Glory. V. 1-4**

V. 1

1. "My brethren" = those to whom James addressed this epistle--scattered tribes--corresponds to true Israel--spiritual Jews through Jesus Christ (Rom. 4:13; 2:28-29; 14:9); "brethren" = from the same womb--the womb of Holy Ghost conviction; therefore, he is referring to the saved; he used a form of the word "brother" 19 times in this epistle--he wants to tell us something; he said "my brethren" which means James was saved the same way every saint is saved--by grace through faith in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. "Have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect of persons" = this is an exhortation not to have the habit of exercising faith in the Lord with respect of persons--this is not following our Lord's example for He did not have respect of persons; some say He did because He had an inner circle of Peter, James, and John, but these three drew closer to Jesus than the others, and He rebuked Peter when he got out of line. (Mat. 16:21-23)

A. "Faith" = conviction of the truth of anything; belief; trust. (Heb. 11:1)

B. "Respect of persons" = to show partiality and favoritism to others on account of their rank, wealth, apparel, and etc.; negated by "not."

C. There was a real problem in those days as to who was Lord. Caesar wanted to be Lord, and many died in his day because they would not say "Caesar was Lord;" James identified the Lord so there would not be any misunderstanding as to what Lord he was talking about.

1) "Our Lord" = James actually used the definite article "the" in the Greek so there would be no misunderstanding; he also used the word "our" which means he, like all saved, was from the womb of Holy Ghost conviction--brethren.

2) Also so that any other reader would not misunderstand he identified the Lord he was talking about as Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory:

a. "Jesus" = His human name.

b. "Christ" = the Messiah--the One all Israel was looking for.

c. Also called "*the Lord* of glory" = "Lord" (second time) is in italics thus not in the original but supplied by the translators; this is written to Jewish Christians who have an understanding of the OT concept of the "shekinah glory" of God, which denoted the visible presence of God dwelling among men (Exo. 13:21); in Num. chapters 22-25 we see Balaam could not curse the people of God to get the glory off them, but he persuaded them to sin and God took His glory off Israel; Moses finished the tabernacle and the Glory filled it Exo. 40:33b-38; Solomon finished the temple and Glory filled it. (II Chron. 5:13-14; 7:1-3--manifestation of the omnipresent God; that is why II Chron. 7:14 is given--if the glory gets off Israel, this verse tells them what to do to get it back--this is still applicable to us today.

D. Faith is our connection to the Glory. The expression "the Glory" also reveals the Divinity of our Lord. Caesar was not divine. Only our Lord Jesus Christ--the Glory is.

E. If we say I am saved, thus saying I have faith in the Lord Jesus and have respect of persons--you have sinning faith and are sinning against the Glory.

## V. 2

1. This verse gives an example of what James had just stated in verse 1--respect of persons.

2. "Assembly" = word for synagogue, the Jewish meeting place; applies to our church today.

3. "Gold ring" = adorned with gold rings; indicates wealth--contrasted with "poor man" = reduced to begging, therefore destitute of wealth, influence, position, and honor.

4. "Apparel" = clothing; raiment; described as "goodly" = radiant; magnificent; sumptuous; contrasted with "vile raiment" = to have on dirty, shabby clothing.

## V. 3

1. "Ye" = the Christian Jews James was writing to; refers to all who say they have faith in Jesus Christ.

2. "Respect" = to gaze at, with favor or partiality.

3. "Gay" = is from same Greek word as "goodly" in verse 2 = radiant; magnificent; sumptuous.
4. "Sit thou here in a good place" = the rich man is given preferential treatment--made sure they had a place to sit--the best seat; there were more people present than they had chairs for them.
5. But the poor man is abruptly told to "stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool" = he was told to stand, or at best, to sit on the floor under my "footstool" = in a lowly place.

#### V. 4

1. "Ye" = the professing Jewish Christians to whom James was writing.
2. "Partial" = to make a distinction; to discriminate; to prefer one over the other; thus divided among "yourselves"--the division is between profession and practice and by such actions:
3. "Become judges of evil thoughts:"
  - A. "Judges" = to form an opinion; they took it upon themselves to be judges.
  - B. "Of evil thoughts" = with "evil thoughts" = evil reasoning; evil surmising; in so doing they were breaking up the unity of the worshipers by differentiating between their worldly status.
4. Thus, the faith of this individual is sinning faith--sin against the Glory.

#### 2. It is sin against the elect. V. 5

#### V. 5

1. "Hearken" = to hear; to perceive the sense of what is said; indicated the intensity of James' appeal.
2. "My beloved brethren:"
  - A. "Beloved" = esteemed; dear; worthy of love because of the Lord (saved).
  - B. "Brethren" = from the same womb--the womb of Holy Ghost conviction; therefore, James is referring to the saved.
  - C. "My" = James who referred to himself as being saved the same way every saint is saved--by grace through faith in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. "Chosen" = to pick or choose out for one's self; root word the word "elect" comes from; His choosing is based upon what is stated in I Peter 1:2--thus being chosen is based on the foreknowledge of God, through sanctification of the Spirit which consists of a completed work of Holy Ghost conviction, which brings a person to the point of obedience which is repenting and believing and at that point the Holy Ghost applies the blood of Christ--chosen, elect, saved. (1 Cor. 1:26-27)
4. "The poor of this world" = refers to those who are poor in spirit (Mat. 5:3), made such by the sanctification of the Spirit; a rich man materially has to be made "poor in spirit" to be saved or he will hold on to his riches and die and go to hell. (Mat. 19:23-26); don't envy the wealthy crowd, the Hollywood crowd, nor the high paid ball playing crowd.
5. These poor ones are "rich in faith" = "rich" means "abounding" which was produced by



being granted saving faith by the sanctification work of the Spirit; faith is a gift from God (John 3:27; Eph. 2:8); faith is the only currency that heaven recognizes. (Heb. 11:1)

6. Also these poor ones are "heirs of the kingdom" which he hath promised to them that love him" = "heirs" refers to those who receive their allotted possession by right of sonship and also those who have obtained the portion promised to them. (Mat. 5:3; Rom. 14:17); these are referred to as "them that love him" = agape love is shed abroad in the heart of every saint (Rom. 5:5) and begins to work in one as he comes to the Lord. (Luke 7:47; I John 4:19)

7. If you have respect of persons, you have the wrong kind of faith--sinning faith--and you sin against the elect.

#### 6. It is a sin against good sense. V. 6-7

##### V. 6

1. "Ye" = the scattered professing Jewish saints to whom James is writing.
2. "Despised" = to dishonor and mistreat.
3. We often times get our priorities wrong and seek to be rich in the world (Mat. 6:33) and in so doing dishonor the poor and show kindness to the rich and they are the very ones who:
  - A. "Oppress you " = to exercise power over you and:
  - B. "Draw you before the judgment seats" = carry you to court; word "draw" is a word for violent treatment.

##### V. 7

1. "They" = rich of this world.
2. "BlaspHEME" = speak abusively; to rail; to speak vile things about.
3. "That worthy name" = that beautiful, good name--Jesus.
4. When you show partiality to that crowd, you have sinning faith--sin against good sense for they are only interested in self. Example: the rich farmer in Luke 12:16-19.
5. The poor in spirit will pray for you, help you, and stand up for you because they know what it is like to suffer--been there, done that. (II Cor. 1:3-4)
6. With those kind, the victory is on the horizon. (I Sam. 22:1-2) David had victory with that kind.
7. May we be balanced in faith and not have sinning faith but strive for saving faith that we not have respect of persons.

#### 4. It is sin against the royal law. V. 8-9

##### V. 8

1. "Ye" = the scattered Jewish professing saints to whom James was writing.
2. "The royal law" = namely "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" which is "according to scripture" = OT (Lev. 19:18, 34) and refers to what Christ said in the NT (Mat. 22:36-40; 7:12--the golden rule) and what Paul said in Rom. 13:8-10.

3. "Fulfil" = complete; execute; accomplish; if you do "ye do well" = rightly, goodly, and nobly.

#### V. 9

1. "But" = reveals contrast.

2. "If" = hypothetical condition.

3. "Ye" = the scattered Jewish professing saints to whom James was writing.

4. "Have respect to persons" = to show partiality; to favor a person; if you do "ye commit sin" = ye work a sin; the tense is continuous action; this expression was intended to remind his hearers that it is willful, conscious sin of which they will be guilty, if they have respect of persons on account of their wealth.

5. "Are convinced" = to convict by proof of guilt.

6. "Law" = refers to the royal law in context.

7. "Transgressors" = one who deviates from recognized truth.

8. In the allegory of the good Samaritan, (Luke 10:30-37) he demonstrated love to a Jew who hated Samaritans. The priest and Levite knew the royal law yet had respect of persons and they worked a sin--sinning faith is a sin against the royal law.

#### 5. It is sin against the moral law--whole law. V. 10-11

#### V. 10

1. "Whosoever" = "he" = refers to any person.

2. "Shall keep" = to observe; to attend to carefully; to guard; the idea is that of guarding something against violation.

3. "Whole law" = moral law--the 10 commandments for James refers to two of the 10 commandments in verse 11.

4. "Offend" = stumble; to err; to trip; refers to stumbling over the border which marks the way.

5. "In one *point*" = point is in italics thus supplied by the translators; refers to one commandment.

6. "He is guilty of all:"

A. "Is" = has become.

B. "Guilty" = liable to a penalty.

C. "All" = refers to his breaking the moral law.

#### V. 11

1. "He that said" = refers to the Lord who wrote the 10 commandments on stones and gave them to Moses who spoke them to the children of Israel; the Lawgiver.

2. "Do not commit adultery" = 7th commandment (Exo. 20:14); commandment forbidding having unlawful sexual relations with another man's wife.

3. "Do not kill" = 6th commandment (Exo. 20:13); commandment forbidding murder. (Mat. 19:18)
4. James just mentioned two commandments as an illustration. If a person just breaks one, he has become a transgressor of the moral law.
5. "Transgressor" = a violator; one who deviates from recognized truth--in this case the 10 commandments. To be a lawbreaker one does not have to violate all the laws, just one. To be a law abiding citizen, one must keep the whole law, even the laws he does not like.
6. The rich young ruler is an example. He thought he kept the commandments, but Jesus told him he lacked one thing. His riches was his god, thus breaking the commandment "Thou shalt have no other gods before me"--the 1st commandment. (Exo. 20:3; Mat. 19:16-22)
7. We might look at this verse and say I am not guilty of this. But what about Mat. 5:27-28 and I John 3:15? Murder springs out of anger, and one who gets angry loses control which leads to hate; therefore, he is well on his way to murder.
8. We have sinning faith if we practice these things and we sin against the moral law.

#### 6. It is sin against the law of liberty. V. 12-13

##### V. 12

1. "So speak ye, and so do" = in the hypothetical case of the rich man and the poor man (verse 2), professors manifested improper speech and action which resulted in them becoming judges with evil motives. (verse 4)
2. Now James reminds them that they themselves faced coming judgment--"the law of liberty" = the Word of God--the truth. (Rom. 2:2; John 17:17; 8:32; 12:47-48)
3. We need to walk in the liberty we have in Christ (Gal. 5:1) but not use that liberty as a license to sin (Gal. 5:13; I Cor. 6:12--"expedient" = profitable; advantageous).
4. "Judged" = to pronounce an opinion concerning right or wrong; all will face judgment; the saved at the judgment seat of Christ (II Cor. 5:10; I Cor. 3:12-15) and the lost will face the great white throne of judgment 1000 years later (Rev. 20:11-12); we can only know good or evil by the Word.
5. Therefore, we need to speak and do according to this law of liberty in all our conduct. If not, we exercise sinning faith and it is sin against the law of liberty--the Word.

##### V. 13

1. He that hath not mercy on his neighbors will not receive mercy from heaven. His judgment will be "without mercy" = means that in the day of judgment, he will not be shown mercy if he did not perform works of mercifulness on earth according to the law of liberty--the Word.
2. By your fruit ye are known, and that is the fruit of the Spirit named in Gal. 5:22-23 which involved "mercy" = compassion, kindness in action; manifests itself chiefly in acts. (Eph. 4:32)
3. If one hath mercy on his neighbors, then that mercy "rejoiceth against judgment" = does not mind facing judgment; mercy will gain victory over judgment.

4. But if you are not showing mercy, you have sinning faith and are sinning against the law of liberty. If that is what you are exercising, then you are not balanced in faith; therefore, you are not blessed.

#### B. Saying faith. V. 14-18

##### V. 14

1. "Say" = the word is used in verse 14, 16, and 18; the tense, not just once, but keeps on saying.
2. "What *doth it* profit" = "profit" means benefit, advantageous.
3. "My brethren:"
  - A. "My" = James who referred to himself as being saved the same way every saint is saved--by grace through faith in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - B. "Brethren" = from the same womb--the womb of Holy Ghost conviction; therefore, James is referring to the saved.
4. "Though" = if; a hypothetical condition.
5. "Man" = refers to human beings, thus male or female.
6. "Hath faith" = refers to what we refer to as someone making a profession of faith--there is a difference between claiming to possess faith and true possession.
7. "Have not works" = "works" refers to acts of love and mercy.
8. "Can faith save him?" = can that kind of faith (saying faith) save him? James is pointing out the uselessness of claiming to have faith if it is not supported by works; Jesus taught that the person who has genuine faith will do the will of God (Mat. 7:21; Luke 6:46); lack of love and mercy (works) indicates a lack of true faith.

##### V. 15

1. "Brother or sister" = the use of "sister" with "brother" indicates that Christianity elevated the status of womanhood above that of the existing cultures; the need of suffering women were recognized along with that of suffering men; this emphasized the care believers should have for hurting members of the church (Gal. 6:10); in Acts 6:1-4 the church at Jerusalem chose seven men, we usually refer to as deacons, to care for the suffering widows.
2. "If" = James used a hypothetical situation to get his point across.
3. "Naked" = without sufficient clothing; ill-clad; person who only wore a tunic (undergarment) was considered naked.
4. "Destitute of daily food" = lacking proper food and lacking enough food to meet their body's requirement.
5. James then gives a statement of what saying faith does:

##### V. 16

1. "And one of you say unto them" = the ill-clad and hungry brother or sister in James' illustration (verse 15) seemed to make the people uncomfortable if they had only saying

faith--only a profession of faith; so "one" of the group became the spokesman who tried to ease the embarrassment by urging the needy to leave the gathering rather than helping them; it was the common problem of not wanting to get involved.

2. "Depart in peace" = this was a customary Jewish parting expression; when used sincerely, it was expressing a wish for total well-being; when used as a formula for asking someone to leave, it was hypocritical, and in this case utterly heartless; this is the same as saying "goodby, leave me alone."

3. "Be ye warmed" = the Greek states "warm yourself:" if they did not have the proper clothing, how can they warm themselves?

5. Instead of warm clothes and satisfying food, they get only empty words to look out for themselves. The wording indicates an intentional decision not to do anything to provide help. It was expecting that someone else would respond to the need, making the destitute person responsible for finding such a generous person.

6. "Notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body" = the change from the singular "one of you" to the plural "ye" indicates that the entire congregation was guilty of the action even though just one person was the spokesman.

7. "What *doth it* profit?" = what advantage is that kind of faith?--it is just saying faith.

8. When a selfish condition exists, the needy are not cared for, and the able but unwilling persons lose an opportunity to be a blessing and in turn to be blessed. (Pro. 28:27)

#### V. 17

1. In this verse James applies the truth of his illustration in verses 15-16. Faith which does not result in works is dead.

2. The Greek has it, "faith if it keeps on not having works is dead in itself--"being alone."

3. "Dead" = means not alive; not living faith; therefore, dead faith inward and outward.

4. Saying faith will not save him.

#### V. 18

1. James introduces an imaginary objector who speaks one sentence "Thou hast faith, and I have works" = in essence he was saying, "Some have the gift of faith and others have the gift of works;" he may have based his view of the teaching of I Cor. 12:4--"there are diversities of gifts."

2. James forcefully rejected this attempt to separate faith and works, "shew me thy faith without thy works" = give me one example of true faith which did not result in good works; this, of course, was impossible.

3. Then James says, "I will shew thee my faith by my works" = he is not teaching a man is saved by works; but the only way genuine faith can be expressed in a Christian's life is by practical loving obedience to the Word of God; the world has no right to believe I am saved if they do not see a change in my life.

4. A sinner is saved by faith without works (Eph. 2:8-9), but saving faith is a faith that leads to works. (Eph. 2:10) This verse needs to be included with verses 8-9.

5. Being a Christian is not a matter of what we say with the lips. It involves what we do with our life.

6. Saying faith is the wrong kind of faith. If that is what you are exercising, then you are not balanced in faith; therefore, you are not blessed.

### C. Shaking faith. V. 19-20

#### V. 19

1. "Thou believest that there is one God" = James is writing to the Jewish professors of faith; they had a belief that God exists--a fundamental doctrine.
2. "Thou doest well" = that is noble; that is good; belief that God exists is not belief or trust in God--not saving faith; it is necessary to be saved (Heb. 11:6); that is good as far as it goes but that is not far enough.
3. "The devils also believe" = refers to the demons believing that God exist. (Mat. 8:29)
4. "And tremble" = to shudder; refers to the hair to bristle (stand) up on the back of neck and goose bumps run up and down the spine; to be struck with extreme fear; to be horrified; the demons do more than believe a fact that God is, they shudder at the fact--more than most Baptists.
5. Some say they believe in hell and that causes them to be horrified and shake--still no better than the devils for they believe in hell. (Mat. 8:29b) Shaking faith is no better than what the devil and his demons have.
6. You may say I believe Jesus is the Son of God; the devils do that (Mat. 8:29a ); therefore, you are no better than the devils if that is all you believe.
7. Some say I believe the Word of God, so do the devils and they can probably quote more scripture than most of us. (Mat. 4:6--he quoted Psalms 91:11-12)
8. Yet all of this is necessary, but you must come to saving faith--a faith that lives.

#### V. 20

1. "But wilt thou know" = know means to know by experience.
2. "O vain man" = "vain" means empty; "man" refers to human beings not just males.
3. "That faith without works is dead" = that the faith you say you have, if it does not produce acts of mercy and love (works), your so called faith is "dead" = not living; destitute of life (eternal); spiritually dead; not saved.
4. If the faith you have is shaking, saying, or sinning faith, you really have a dead faith. What you need is saving faith--produces works because it is alive.
5. If you are balanced in faith, you have saving faith that produces works and others can see it. Then you are blessed!

### D. Saving faith. V. 21-26

#### V. 21

1. James uses two examples--Abraham and Rahab.
2. "Abraham our father" = the fore-father of the Hebrews--Jews.
3. "Justified" = the word used by itself means to render righteous; but when used with

"works" it means shown to be righteous.

4. "By works" = action of obedience to God:

A. There is no contradiction between Paul and James. Paul stated Abraham was justified by faith (Rom. 3:28; 4:1-3) and James says by works.

B. Notice the context of Rom. 4:2, it is "before God" while James uses "Seest thou" in verse 22 and "Ye see" in verse 24, thus he is referring to before man. In verse 18 James said, "I will shew thee my faith by my works."

5. "When he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar" = Abraham had faith and was not afraid to obey God (Gen. 22:1-2); Heb. 11:17-19 indicates that Abraham believed that God would even raise Isaac from the dead; therefore, James is pointing to the offering of Isaac as proof of the faith that Abraham already had; that is what he is saying in the next verse.

V. 22

1. "Seest thou" = before man.

2. "How faith wrought with his works" = faith co--operated with his works--the deed of offering up Isaac.

3. Also by his works "was faith made perfect" = faith was made complete--carried to the end--brought to maturity.

4. The genuineness of Abraham's faith was proven when it reached the goal of obedience to God.

V. 23

1. "The scripture" = Gen. 15:6.

2. "Fulfilled" = to bring to pass; accomplished; means that the full meaning of the language of scripture was expressed by this act, thus showing that his faith was genuine.

3. This is the same passage that Paul quotes in Rom. 4:3 to show that Abraham's faith preceded his circumcision and was the basis of his justification.

4. "Imputed" = an act of God whereby He puts righteousness upon a believer--point where saving faith is exercised; this same Greek word is translated "counted" in Rom. 4:3.

5. Remember James is writing to Jewish professing Christians, and according to Jewish teaching, faith was a good deed which was bound to bring its reward. Therefore, James shows that saving faith was exercised before works, but the only way man can see another's faith is by his works.

6. James reminded his readers that Abraham "was called the friend of God" = a title given to him and one that the Jews knew and claimed (Isa. 41:8); Jesus indicated the significance of friendship with God in John 15:14-15.

V. 24

1. "Justified" = the word here means, shown to be righteous, not made righteous by works but shown to be righteous--"ye see" = before man--human being, thus referring to male and female.

2. James is discussing the proof of faith, not the initial act of being set right with God which was Paul's idea in Rom. 4:1-3.

3. "Not by faith only" = this phrase clears up what James means; saving faith is what we must all have to enter heaven, only it must show itself in deeds or works as Abraham's did; and it will if it is saving faith, because saving faith is living faith that works--not a dead faith.

#### V. 25

1. "Likewise" = in the same way saving faith in Abraham's life manifested itself in works, so did Rahab's.

2. "Also" = indeed.

3. "Rahab the harlot" = identified such because in her younger life she lived such a life but it seems that her lifestyle had changed when the spies came, for she hid them under stalks of flax used for weaving, thus her lifestyle had changed. (Josh. 2:6)

4. "Justified" = same word as in verse 24; means she was shown to be righteous by her works; what works?

A. When she had received the messengers" = means she welcomed the messengers called spies. (Heb. 11:31)

B. "And had sent *them* out another way" = she let them down by a cord through the window instead of the door, for her house was upon the town wall. (Josh. 2:15)

5. When was she saved? Some think she was saved when she heard about the Red sea experience (Josh. 2:9-11; this was sung about at the Red sea. Exo. 15:14-16) I believe she was awakened which caused her to change her lifestyle and when the spies showed up at her house--not by accident but God sent--she was saved because she confessed. (Josh. 2:11) She renounced all the idols of the heathen, glorified God with her lips fulfilling Rom. 10:10.

6. She displayed her faith by obeying what the spies told her. (Josh. 2:21) She risked her life to identify with Israel, God's people--proof of saving faith.

#### V. 26

1. This verse summarizes the whole matter.

2. "The body without the spirit is dead" = the same Greek word for "spirit" is also translated "breath;" therefore, as the body without breath is dead "so faith without works is dead also."

3. Sad to say, but there are multitudes of professing Christians and church members who have "dead faith." They have a profession with their lips but their lives deny what they profess. That is what Paul said in Titus 1:16 and Jesus referred to in Rev. 3:1.

4. Real Christians are "a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2:14) That is why Paul said in II Cor. 13:5 "prove your own selves"--prove saving faith by works. This does not mean that a true Christian never sins and never fails to obey God, but it does mean that a true Christian does not make sinning the habit of his life.

5. Saving faith is a live faith and it will produce works. (Eph. 2:8-10)

6. What kind of faith do you have? Blessed are the balanced in faith!





## CHAPTER 3:

### **V. Blessed are the balanced in speech. V. 1-18**

#### A. The teacher's peril. V. 1

V. 1

1. "My brethren:"

A. "My" = James who referred to himself as being saved the same way every saint is saved--by grace through faith in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

B. "Brethren" = from the same womb--the womb of Holy Ghost conviction; therefore, James is referring to the saved.

2. "Be not many masters" = refers to teachers; this is a command--"stop becoming many teachers; " James saw the danger of many desiring to be teachers, while only few were qualified; the word for "masters" implies authority but it is not authority based on power, but on superior qualifications:

A. God gives the gift and He does the placing. (I Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11) One is not to teach just because he desires to. He needs God's calling on his life.

B. Teachers, themselves, should have a teachable spirit--part of the fruit of the Spirit. (Gal. 5:22-23--meekness); thus, being "apt to teach" --skillful in teaching. (I Tim. 3:2)

3. "Knowing" = to have absolute positive knowledge of the facts.

4. "We" = refers to "masters"--teachers; James included himself in this group.

5. "Shall receive the greater condemnation" = greater judgment; this is a warning to those teachers who teach error and fail to meet their responsibility; they will have to give an account of their ministry to the Lord even in this life (Heb. 13:17) and will stand before the judgment seat of Christ after the rapture. (II Cor. 5:10; I Cor. 3:13-15)

#### B. The tongue's power. V. 2-12

##### 1) Universal danger. V. 2

V. 2

1. "We" = refers not just to teachers as in verse 1 but to "all" believers (professors) to whom he was writing.

2. "Offend" = to stumble, fall; then to err, to fail in duty; James is quick to agree that all of us (including himself) stumble in many ways (things; all); especially in what we say--"word" = refers to speech; this includes attitudes of speech such as sarcasm and impatience (James 1:19) as well as content.

3. "If any man offend not in word (speech)" that man ("the same") "is a perfect man" = maturity; complete in the sense James explains as "able also to bridle the whole body:"

##### 2) Unrealized Power. V. 3-12

###### a. Power to direct. V. 3-5a

V. 3

1. "Behold" = Look here; listen to what I have to say--perk up your ears.

2. "We" = "us" = refers to anyone who rides a horse--illustration used in this verse.
3. "The horse" = the most spirited of animals, is guided by the bit and bridle (some use a hack-a-more to do the same thing) thus, his body has to follow his head.

#### V. 4

1. "Behold" = listen to another illustration--ships.
2. "Though *they be* so great" = Paul was on a ship which had 276 men and all its cargo on board (Acts 27:37); James thought that was big; if he had only seen the modern mammoth ships--cruise ships (some carry 1100 crew and 3400 passengers); but for his day that ship was of great size.
3. "Driven of fierce winds" = winds that seem to leave the ship beyond control; compares to adverse circumstances we face.
4. "Yet are they turned about" = guided or directed in treacherous conditions "with a very small helm" = the rudder; the part of the ship that directs it through treacherous waters; small when compared to the ship.
5. "Whithersoever" = wherever; refers to desire.
6. "The governor" = the steer-man; the man at the wheel; the pilot.
7. "Listeth" = willeth.
8. To sum up this verse: a ship as large as it is, seems to be unmanageable by its vastness, especially when being driven by storms, yet it is easily managed by a small rudder. He that has control of that small rudder, has control of the ship itself.

#### V. 5

1. "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things" = "boasteth great things" means to bear one's self loftily in speech:
  - A. The tongue is compared to the bit and "helm" (rudder) which is small when compared to the body. Yet it has power to direct just like the bit and rudder.
  - B. We often think our words are not important, but the wrong word can direct the listener into the wrong path. An idle word, a questionable story, a half truth, or a deliberate lie could change the course of a life and lead it to destruction.
  - C. On the other hand, the right word, used by the Spirit, could direct a soul out of sin and into salvation.
  - D. The secret of directing the horse is not the bit, nor directing the ship, the rudder. The secret is the one who has the reins in his hand, the one who steers the ship. The horse and ship go where they desire and will for them to go.
  - E. Just as the bit needs a guide and the rudder needs one to steer, our tongues need the Lord to control them so the power of the tongue will be directed the right way.

#### b. Power to destroy. V. 5b-8

2. "Behold" = listen up to what I am about to say.
3. "How great a matter a little fire kindleth" = "matter" refers to wood, forest, groves, fire-

wood, or fuel; a small fire may kindle (to inflame) a very large forest; every year thousands of acres are lost because of careless campers or smokers.

4. The tongue, though little, can "boasteth great things" = talk big; just as a spark can set a forest on fire, a word spoken by the tongue may set a neighborhood, or a home, or a church in a flame. (Pro. 16:27)

#### V. 6

1. The tongue is described as "a fire" and "a world of iniquity" = a little world of evil in itself; means that all kinds of evil that are in the world are exhibited by our tongue; thus "it defileth the whole body" = means that the tongue can play havoc in the members of the human body.

2. Thus, "setteth on fire the course of nature" = the whole circle of natural, inborn passions; the meaning is that the wrong use of the tongue causes jealousy, factions, and every vile deed; "I love you" spoken by many Romeos causes passions to be stirred, lust to burn, and a girl's purity destroyed, because he really did not mean what he said--but her life is destroyed.

3. "It is set on fire of hell" = "it" refers to the tongue; the idea is that which causes the tongue to do so much evil, derives its origin from "hell" = gehenna; the lake of fire--the continual source of the fire in the tongue; nothing could better characterize much of that which the tongue does, than to say that it has its origin in hell and has the spirit which reigns there.

#### V. 7

1. In this verse James compares the tongue to beasts.

2. "Tamed" = to control or dominate so as to render useful or beneficial.

3. James is not saying that every animal has been tamed, but he is speaking of the great power which man has over all kinds of animals which are by nature savage and wild. Yet man cannot tame his own tongue.

#### V. 8

1. "But the tongue can no man tame" = speaking of taming his tongue himself; there is no power of man to keep it under control, and we cannot control it without the help of the Holy Spirit. (Phil. 4:13; Gal. 5:22-23; temperance--control by the aid of the Holy Spirit.)

2. "It" = the tongue that is set on fire of hell.

3. "Is an unruly evil" = refers to restless evil without restraint.

4. "Full of deadly poison" = refers to how the tongue can destroy the happiness of man and the peace of society, just as poison can destroy one's body; in Rom. 3:13 the tongue is compared to the poison of "asps" = a most poison Egyptian cobra.

5. No man can control the tongue. Only God can control it through His Spirit. It is an unrealized power that can direct or destroy but also it has:

#### c. Power to delight. V. 9-12

## V. 9

1. "Therewith" = with the tongue.
2. "Bless" = means to praise, thank, and worship.
3. "We" = refers to the professing brethren James was writing to.
4. "God, even the Father" = refers to our Creator and our Sustainer--provider.
5. "Curse" = to wish every one evil or ruin.
6. "Men" = mankind who "are made after the similitude of God."
7. "Similitude" = likeness; refers to Adam being made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26); after the fall all mankind are made in the image of Adam (Gen. 5:3) and when one is saved they are made a new creation. (II Cor. 5:17)
8. James refers to the same tongue being used to bless God on Sunday and curse the brethren (saved) on Monday. This is done by the same organ--the tongue.

## V. 10

1. "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing" = refers to both being done by the same organ--the tongue.
2. "My brethren:"
  - A. "My" = James who referred to himself as being saved the same way every saint is saved--by grace through faith in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - B. "Brethren" = from the same womb--the womb of Holy Ghost conviction; therefore, James is referring to the saved.
3. Then James admonished, "these thing ought not so to be" = ought not to keep on happening; as we bless God, we ought with the same organ to bless those who are like Him--saved--new creatures. (II Cor. 5:17)

## V. 11

1. In this verse James compares the tongue to a fountain.
2. "Fountain" = spring; word means an opening in the earth from which a fountain gushes out.
3. James asks a question, "can both sweet *water* and bitter come out at the same place?" a negative answer is expected; nothing can bring forth that which is not corresponding to its nature.

## V. 12

1. James used a tree and a vine in comparison to the tongue.
2. He is addressing this to the professing Jewish Christians--"my brethren."
  - A. "My" = James who referred to himself as being saved the same way every saint is saved--by grace through faith in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - B. "Brethren" = from the same womb--the womb of Holy Ghost conviction; therefore,

James is referring to the saved.

3. A negative answer is expected to both these questions. Nothing can bring forth that which is not corresponding to its nature.

A. A fig tree's nature is to produce figs.

B. An olive tree bears olives and they will never produce otherwise.

4. "So *can* no fountain both yield salt water and fresh" = implies the tongue also brings forth according to its nature (Mat. 12:34-35); if you praise God on Sunday and curse out on the job on Monday, you have a cursing nature--old nature and James says "these things ought not to be" (verse 10b)

5. There is something wrong with the heart when the tongue is inconsistent. If we have a new nature, we will be like a fountain that brings forth sweet water and that brings delight to those who partake.

6. After considering these pictures, the believer must realize that he cannot permit Satan to use his tongue. The wrong word at the wrong time could break a heart and lead a person astray. That is the reason James said in verse 1, "don't desire to be a teacher" because there is a great responsibility in using our tongue. It has unrealized power to 1) direct, 2) destroy, and 3) delight.

7. Therefore, we need to make Psa. 141:3 our prayer, so we can be balanced in speech and be blessed.

### C. Practical application. V. 13-18

#### 1. Positive exhortation. V. 13

V. 13

1. "Who *is* a wise man among you?" = wise in a practical sense; one who in action is governed by loyalty and integrity; one who carries out knowledge into his life--speaks of having the knowledge of how to regulate one's relationship with God.

2. "Who is endued with knowledge among you" = intelligent; experience; refers to one who understands and knows.

3. The equivalent of these two words are used together in Deut. 1:13.

4. "Let him shew" = refers to the man who is wise and endued with knowledge; "shew" means to give evidence or proof of a thing.

5. How? "out of a good conversation" = "conversation" means walk, behavior, manner of life; lifestyle; described as "good" = identifies what kind of lifestyle--morally good.

6. "Out of" = speaks of one's good and consistent life as a source of giving evidence or proving he is wise and has understanding.

7. "Works" = one's acts; includes speech.

8. This is to be "with meekness of wisdom" = refers to a wise and prudent gentleness of life--speaks of humility and having a teachable spirit.

#### 2. Negative exhortation. V. 14

V. 14

1. "But" = shows contrast between the positive and negative exhortation.
2. "Ye" = "your" = refers to the professing Jewish Christians to whom James is writing; applies to all who claim to be saved.
3. "Envy" = excitement of mind; fervor of spirit; zeal in embracing or defending anything; can be used for good or bad which is the case here being described as "bitter" = harsh; poisonous; extremely active in doing injury; these two words together means an envious and contentious rivalry and jealousy.
4. "Strife" = a desire to put one's self forward; faction.
5. If that is in your heart, "glory not" = do not boast of your knowledge and wisdom.
6. "And lie not against the truth" = actions speak louder than words; if you boast of wisdom and knowledge and your lifestyle is bitter envying and causes strife, your boasting is a lie because your actions tell the truth.
7. The pride of knowledge is always a subtle evil. (I Cor. 8:1; Heb. 12:15)

### 3. Contrast of earthly and heavenly wisdom. V. 15-18

#### 1) Earthly wisdom. V. 15-16

##### V. 15

1. "This wisdom" = refers to verse 14 of which they boast and glory.
2. "Descendeth not from above" = it is not from heaven--not from God.
3. "But *is* earthly" = has its origin is this world, and partakes of the spirit of this world--characteristic of the lost (Eph. 2:2); this is what men exhibit who are governed by worldly principles.
4. "Sensual" = natural; animal; because it is under the sway of natural lust; speaks of being governed by the soul, also speaks of wisdom in harmony with the corrupt desires and affections, and springing from them.
5. "Devilish" = demon-like; resembling or proceeding from an evil spirit; Paul spoke of this in I Tim. 4:6; the wisdom of verse 14 is demon-like because it is full of pride, egotism, malignity, and ambition, which are the works of the devil--such as demons exhibit. (Pro. 13:10)

##### V. 16

1. "Confusion" = is "where envying and strife *is*;" means instability; a state of disorder; disturbance; tumult; unquietness; everything is unsettled and agitated; there is no operation in promoting a common object; there is no stability in any plan; God is not the author (I Cor. 14:33); do not try to label preaching the truth with this kind of wisdom; some say I am confused because of the preacher and what he preaches, when in reality, the truth or light revealed confusion already there (Gen. 1:2); if you are saved, even error--false doctrine will not confuse you because you have the Holy Spirit. (John 16:13; Mat. 24:24)
2. "Every evil work" = "evil" means worthless of no account, bad, wicked, base as opposed to good; this can be observed in a home, church, or community where the spirit of strife prevails; all love and harmony disappears in places where the peaceful virtues ought to prevail, where springs up every evil passion that tends to mar the peace of a

home, church, or community.

3. That is earthly wisdom.

## 2) Heavenly wisdom. V. 17-18

V. 17

1. "But" = shows the contrast between earthly and heavenly wisdom.
2. "Wisdom that is from above" = from heaven; from God.
3. "Pure" = from root word which means holy; does not refer to doctrines of the church but must be applied to the individual conscience of men.
4. Note: "First pure" = the first effect of wisdom is on the heart to make it pure--makes man upright, sincere, honest, and holy; the first effect is not:
  - A. On the intellect to make it more enlightened.
  - B. On the imagination to make it more brilliant.
  - C. On the memory and judgment to make them clearer and stronger.
  - D. But it is to purify the heart, to make the man upright, non offensive, and good.
5. "Peaceable" = loving peace; the wisdom from above will cause a man to live in peace with all others (Heb. 12:14; Pro. 3:17; "her" = wisdom); as great as peace is, purity comes before peace; there is an old saying "peace at any price" but that is not worth having; Jesus did not accept the devil's peace of surrender; the peace of God (Phil. 4:7) will not come till there is first purity.
6. "Gentle" = mild, not offensive; fair; used as a contrast to strife; also means sweet reasonableness; same Greek word is translated "moderation" in Phil. 4:5 and "patient" in I Tim. 3:3; from this word we get the word gentleman; therefore, wisdom from above makes a man a gentleman and a woman a gentlewoman.
7. "Easy to be entreated" = easily obeying; easily persuaded; refers only to cases where it is right and proper to be easily persuaded and obeyed.
  - A. The sense is that one under the influence of the wisdom from above is not a stiff, stern, obstinate, or unyielding man.
  - B. He does not take a position and hold it whether right or wrong.
  - C. He is not a man on whom arguments or persuasions cannot have any influence.
  - D. He is one who is ready to yield when truth requires him to do it and who is willing to sacrifice his own convenience for the good of others.
  - E. Gentle and easy to be entreated, hard to provoke, and easily pacified.
8. "Full of mercy" = kindness or good will towards the miserable and afflicted joined with a desire to relieve them; love in action; willing to help an individual even if they are in trouble as a result of their own fault.
9. "Full" = up to the brim; also applies to "good fruits" = speaks of fruits of good living; just; benevolent, and kind actions. (Phil. 1:11)
10. "Without partiality" = means making no distinction, that is in the treatment of others; true wisdom makes us impartial in our treatment of others--that is, we are not influenced by regard of fancy clothes, rank, or position but show kindness to all being full of mercy



and good fruits.

11. "Without hypocrisy" = sincere; what one professes to be; there is no disguise or false face, no put on; what the man pretends to be, he is; honest and not two faced but facing the right way all the time.

#### V. 18

1. "The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace" = means that righteousness produces certain results on one's life, like the effects of seed sown in good ground; "sown in peace" = harmony.

2. "Of them" = by them; by those who desire to produce peace, or who are of a peaceful temperament and disposition.

3. "Make" = to be the cause of or the author of (II Cor. 5:18); our ministry is to make peace.

4. Peace and righteousness belong together. They are the result of true wisdom--the wisdom that is from above.

5. On the other hand, confusion and every evil work belong together, and they are the result of the wisdom that is earthly.

6. Which do you have--wisdom from above or wisdom from beneath?

7. The tongue has unrealized power:

A. To direct or delight--wisdom from above.

B. To destroy--wisdom from beneath.

8. May we be balanced in our speech by possessing wisdom from above.

### CHAPTER 4:

#### **VI. Blessed are the balanced in life. V. 1-17**

##### A. Enemies we must face V. 1-7

1. There is found in Eph. 2:1-3 a picture of a lost man who lives for the world and the flesh, and is controlled by the world, flesh, and the devil.

2. But when a man is saved, he receives the Holy Spirit within and has a new nature; however he still battles these three enemies.

3. James deals with these three enemies we must face and gives us some exhortations about how to be balanced in life, and then we can be blessed.

##### 1. The flesh. V. 1-3

#### V. 1

1. James asks a question.

2. "From whence" = from where; from what condition; from what origin or source.

3. "Wars = dispute; strife; quarrel; refers to quarrels and factions among professing Christians, not wars between nations.

4. "Fightings" = strife; contention; a quarrel; speaks of people at variance.
5. The word "wars" pictures the whole campaign, while "fightings" present the separate conflicts or battles in the war. The use of these two words covers the whole ground of the strife involved so there would not be any misunderstanding.
6. "Among you" = speaks of variance between saints (gave benefit of doubt as to being saved) to whom written, whether with companion, church, or community.
7. "Hence" = means this source, speaking about "your lusts that war in your members:"
  - A. "Lusts" = refers to desire or appetite for pleasure--in context; the desire to get what one does not have but greatly desires for his pleasure.
  - B. "War" = refers to the conflict between those desires that have their seat in the flesh and war with the principles of the mind and conscience, producing a state of agitation and conflict.
  - C. "Members" = referring to the different parts of the body; this conflict is inside, but when a man is at war with himself within, he usually takes it out on those around him; when a person is dissatisfied with himself, he usually is dissatisfied with those around him--therefore "wars and fightings among you."

## V. 2

1. James lists the sinful actions in verses 2-3 when the flesh battles.
2. "Ye" = the professing Jewish Christians to whom James is writing; applies to those who claim to be saved.
3. "Lust" = from a different Greek word than in verse 1; it is a stronger word meaning to long for; to set the heart upon something.
4. "And have not" = that you wish to have, you do not possess and to which you have no just claim, and this prompts an effort to obtain by force.
5. "Ye kill" = speaks of having a murderous disposition--a brutal and murderous spirit that go so far as to murder--the result of lusting and not possessing that you lust for; Paul warned of this in Gal. 5:14-15.
6. "Desire" = to be heated or to boil with envy; coveting what one does not have.
7. "Cannot obtain" = cannot get, gain, procure, or acquire by fair and honest means--by purchase or negotiation and this leads to bloody conquest:
8. "Ye fight and war" = coveting what a man does not have is the cause of fighting and war for man or nation; result of lusting and not having your desire fulfilled.
9. "Yet you have not, because you ask not" = speaks of failing to pray; if you sought the Lord for what you truly needed, you would obtain it, for He will bestow upon you all that is necessary--if you will meet His conditions. (Phil. 4:19)

## V. 3

1. "Ye" = "your" = the professing Jewish Christians to whom James is writing; applies to all who claim to be saved.
2. "Ask" = refers to their praying.

3. "Receive not" = did not obtain what they asked for; in verse 2 James said they did not pray and now when they did pray, they prayed selfishly that they might fulfill their desires and pleasures and not really seeking God's will.
4. "Because" = introduces the reason they did not receive what they ask for--"Ye ask amiss" = improperly; wrongly; motive not right; they ask with bad intent = "that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts."
5. "Consume" = to waste; squander; refers to wasting what you do receive in luxurious indulgence.
6. "Lusts" = fleshly desire for pleasure.
7. The flesh can even encourage a man to pray, but when the motive is wrong we cannot expect to receive an answer from God.
8. Our flesh is our enemy.

## 2. World. V. 4-6

### V. 4

1. "Ye" = same as verses 3 and 4.
2. "Adulterers" - "adulteresses" = both words refer to both the male and female being unfaithful to their partner in marriage; used here in the sense of one who is saved, in essence, is married to the Lord; when one turns to the world and becomes its friend, that one is committing spiritual adultery--therefore, called adulterers (males) and adulteresses (females)--these words in context mean being unfaithful to the Lord; unclean; apostate.
3. "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" = James poses this as a question.
  - A. "Know ye not" = to have an absolute knowledge of the facts; if really saved they should know or at least come to know, because the Holy Spirit who inhabits every saint will guide into all truth (John 16:13); and the Word of God is very clear in I John 2:15--do ye not know this?
  - B. "Friendship" = fondness for; affection for.
  - C. "The world" = in context refers to the worldly ways and world system that is ruled for the most part by those who know not God; we are commanded to not be conformed (in agreement) to this world (Rom. 12:2)--do you not know this?
  - D. "Enmity" = hostility; opposite of agape--God kind of love--do you not know this?
4. Now James makes a statement, "Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God:"
  - A. "Whosoever will" = implies purpose, intention, design; it means the heart is set on it; or that there is a deliberate purpose to seek the friendship of the world; that person is the enemy of God.
  - B. "Enemy" = an adversary actively, hostile, hating, and opposing God.
  - C. That person is a "professor" and not a "possessor" because his life style is continuously in sin. Even though written to brethren, this calls for examination. John warned in I John 2:15, and Jesus said in John 15:18-19 the world will love its own and hate the children of God.

## V. 5

1. This verse is not a quotation but a principle found in scripture.
2. "Ye" = "us" = see notes on verses 2-3.
3. "Vain" = falsely.
4. We could ask two questions as James did and then give an answer not recorded here.
  - A. Do you think that the scripture speaks (in principle) in vain, or without a good reason, when it condemns such a worldly lifestyle? Answer--"No!"
  - B. Do you think that the Spirit of God, who dwelleth in all saints, leads us to envy? Answer--"No!"
5. "The spirit that dwelleth in us" = notice "spirit" is not in caps thus the "spirit" that "dwelleth" (inhabits) those who "lusteth" (desires) to "envy" (ill will; spite, and jealousy, that which causes wars and fightings among you; verse 1) is the spirit of the prince of the power of the air which is in every child of disobedience (Eph. 2:2)
6. Thus, these verses are a definite call to examine your experience of salvation and get honest about your condition and what is being produced in your life so you may be able to really be saved while you have your being, and there is a long-suffering God, a preacher of righteousness, an open door, and a striving Spirit present and available to those who get honest and have an ear to hear.

## V. 6

1. "But" = shows contrast to verse 5.
2. "He" = God.
3. "Giveth" = to bestow a gift; supply, furnish; the tense is continuous action--He gives and keeps on giving.
4. "More" = greater.
5. "Grace" = unearned or unmerited favor; the Greek word is "charis" which means a favor freely done for a friend out of the generosity of the heart, expecting nothing in return, but Jesus went further and died for His enemies (us). (Rom. 5:10)
6. "Wherefore" = in view of the fact that "He giveth more grace."
7. "Resisteth" = to rage in battle against. (Pro. 3:34)
8. "The proud" = showing oneself above others; arrogance; having pride. (Pro. 16:18; 29:23)
9. "Humble" = of low degree; lowly in spirit; opposite of "proud."
10. Thus, He giveth more (greater) grace to the humble. Greater than what--enough for us to have victory over our enemies, the flesh, the world, and:

### 3. The Devil. V. 7

## V. 7

1. James gives us instruction how to overcome the devil. Most say resist the devil and he will flee from you, but first you must submit to God.

2. "Submit" = to be subject; obey; every subject has a king; means to submit to one's control, to yield to one's admonition or advice.
3. "Yourselves" = "you" = the professing Jewish Christians James was writing to; also applies to professing Christians today.
4. "Therefore" = in view of what he said in verse 6, we need to submit to God.
5. Then "resist" = to set one's self against; to withstand; oppose; same Greek word is translated "withstand" in Eph. 6:13; we have got to put on the whole armor including the sword--the word; Jesus used it when tempted by the devil in Mat. 4 and the devil left Him.
6. "He" = "the devil" = slanderer; Satan our enemy.
7. "Will flee" = to seek safety by flight.
8. Someone said, "The devil can wrestle against the Christian, but cannot throw him." If a person will submit to God and resist the devil, he will flee.
9. This world is a competition arena where we compete with our flesh, the world, and the devil. But if we learn how to be balanced in life we can stand and have victory and having done all still stand and therefore, we will be blessed.

#### B. Exhortations we must heed. V. 8-17

Now James turns to three warnings.

##### 1. Warnings against pride. V. 8-10

V. 8

1. Wherever there are wars and fightings (verse 1) there has to be pride. (Pro. 13:10; "contention" = quarrel.)
2. Pride puts us at a distance from God; therefore, the exhortation of verse 8a--"draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you:"
  - A. "Draw nigh" = to approach; to turn one's thoughts to God; to be in fellowship with Him; we cannot in a literal sense get any nearer to God than we always are because He is omnipresent, but we may come nearer in a spiritual sense.
    - 1) We may address Him directly in prayer.
    - 2) We may approach Him by meditation on His character.
  - B. If we draw nigh to God, we have a promise, "he will draw nigh to you" = He does so in the bestowment of His grace and help.
  - C. "You" = refers to the professing Jewish Christians James was writing to; applies to us today.
3. Pride defiles us; therefore, the exhortation of verse 8b,c--"Cleanse *your* hands, ye sinners; and purify *your* hearts, ye double minded."
  - A. "Cleanse *your* hands" = means to abstain in future from wrong doing; this is not talking about ritualism of the Pharisees (Isa. 1:15-16)
  - B. "Ye sinners" = pre-eminently sinful especially wicked; speaking to the professors who were not saved; the Bible never refers to a saved person as a "sinner" but as a "saint," because there has been a completed work of the "sanctification of the Spirit."
  - C. "Purify *your* hearts" = the word means to set apart--sanctify; the phrase means do

not be satisfied with a mere external reformation, with just putting away your outward transgressions; there must be a deeper work than that--a work which reaches the heart--God's work.

D. "Ye double minded" = mean two spirited; vacillating between opinions--can't make up one's mind; that man is "unstable" = (James 1:8,6) unsettled; unsteady; fickle; staggering; reeling like a drunken man--weaving side to side getting nowhere; that man can't be depended on.

E. "Hands" = speaks of outside while "heart" speaks of inside; note: what is inside does come on the outside. (Mat. 23:25-26)

4. Thus we see that pride causes one to be actively engaged in sin, and one in that condition is not headed to heaven. (I Cor. 6:9-10) Also pride causes one to be double minded--divided in interest, between God and the world.

## V. 9

1. To overcome and have victory James exhorts these following actions on account of their sin.

2. "Be afflicted" = properly means to endure toil and hardships; in context, they were to feel distressed and sad on account of their sins; the language used shows that those who had done wrong should voluntarily feel sorrow for it--afflict themselves.

3. "Mourn" = to be grieved--equivalent to godly sorrow (II Cor. 7:10); this is not talking about man produced but produced by God; if this is worked in one's heart, that person has a promise to be blessed--spiritually prosperous. (Mat. 5:4)

4. "Weep" = to sob; lament; weeping as a sign of pain and grief over their sins.

5. "Let laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to heaviness" = "laughter" and "joy" are speaking of those to whom James was writing, as giving themselves to mirth and revelry instead of sorrow and repentance, on account of their sin.

A. James said you need to be mourning, grieving over your sin--be serious instead of silly or light hearted.

B. You need to have "heaviness" = a downcast look, expressive of sorrow, hence shame, dejecting, and gloom; hanging down of the eyes like the publican in Luke 18:13; this speaks of godly sorrow and repentance. (II Cor. 7:10)

6. Our problem is that we do not want to mourn, but look at what David said in Psa. 51:17.

## V. 10

1. "Humble yourselves" = to confess one's spiritual littleness and unworthiness; take your appropriate place in the dust on account of your sins; this can only be done when we allow the Lord to work this in us. (John 3:27)

2. "In the sight of the Lord" = not in man's sight and you can't fool Him for He knows; David said so in Psa. 51:4; the prodigal said he had sinned before the Lord (Luke 15:18) but he came to himself before he admitted that. (Luke 15:17)

3. "And he shall lift you up" = we have this definite promise from the Lord when we "humble" ourselves; He will exalt you from the condition of a broken-hearted sinner to that of a forgiven child:

- He will wipe away your tears.
- He will remove the sadness of your heart.
- He will fill you with joy.
- He will clothe you in clean garments (I John 1:9)

4. Remember pride is a hideous sin and opens the door for the devil, our enemy to operate.

## 2. Warning against criticism. V. 11-12

### V. 11

1. When a man is proud, he is quick to criticize others.
2. "Speak not evil one of another, brethren" = the Greek construction means stop this which was already going on.
  - A. "Speak evil" = one word in the Greek; to slander; to incriminate; to speak against one--against their actions, motives, manner of living, their families, and etc.
  - B. James is speaking to professing Christians whom he calls "brethren" and "brother" = professing to be from the same womb of Holy Ghost conviction.
3. "Judgeth" = "judge" = to pronounce an opinion concerning right or wrong; to do so is to judge with a harsh judgment, with an unfair judgment, finding fault with this and with that when there is no basis, no standard to do so; also means to condemn--this kind of judgment is wrong; this is not referring to church discipline, which we are commanded to do (I Cor. 5:11-13), the reason being we have a standard for that type of judgment = the Bible; also Mat. 7:20 states one is known by his fruit.
4. This verse refers to personal convictions in areas not clearly defined in the Word of God. An example in the Bible is the Pharisees, who through tradition, had laws that were binding yet they had no Biblical basis for such. They criticized Jesus for not complying to the rules that they thought binding. For instance, the washing of hands in Mark 7:1-9. In Phil. 1:12-18 Paul did not speak evil of those who did not think exactly the same way as he did, whatever their motive.
5. James says one who speaks evil = judges his brother = also speaks evil of the law of Christ = the royal law = judgeth the law = thus becoming superior to the law = then that person is not a "doer of the law" = "doer" means performer; one who obeys and fulfills; but a "judge" = one who passes judgment on anything; to pass an opinion concerning right or wrong--based on opinion not a standard--the Bible.

### V. 12

1. "One lawgiver" = excludes all others but God; this is an office which belongs to God and not to man. (Rom. 14:2-4)
2. "Who is able to save and destroy" = means there is only one God and He is entrusted with power and is:
  - A. Abundantly able to administer His government.
  - B. To restrain where it is necessary to restrain.
  - C. To save where it is proper to save.

D. To punish where it is just to punish.

3. "Save" = to save in the technical biblical sense--delivered from the penalty of sin.

4. "Destroy" = to perish; to be lost; ruined; to give over to eternal misery in hell--condemn.

5. James then ask a question, "who are thou that judgest another?" = just who do you think you are? only God can condemn; therefore, this matter may be safely left in His hands--He is the judge and all records will be set straight one day.

### 3. Warning against self confidence. V. 13-17

#### V. 13

1. Pride, criticism, and self-confidence go together. Self-confidence is similar to pride. We can be over confident in our plans and our ability to perform.

2. This verse speaks of one who has plans for a year and takes for granted he will have the ability to work that long. Self-confident.

3. They formed plans as if they knew what next year held for them.

#### V. 14

1. "Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow" = you make long range plans but in reality you do not know what tomorrow holds.

2. "What is your life?" = "it is even a vapour" = an example of you exhaling on a cool damp morning--what you see is a vapor "that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" = gone ever so quickly and that is the way your life is (Job 14:1-2); Pro. 27:1 says do not be over confident about tomorrow.

#### V. 15

1. "For that ye *ought* to say" = instead of saying what you did in verse 13, you should say, "If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that."

2. This speaks of an attitude of mind. Also this speaks of recognizing your absolute dependence on God and realize that life and success are subject to His will. If the Lord should will and we should live, then you may do this, or that.

#### V. 16

1. "But now ye rejoice in your boastings" = "rejoice" means to glory in a thing; "boastings" = means empty, braggart talk about what you can do, your skill and ability, and your planning; reveals you do not anticipate failure; you do not see how plans so skillfully formed can fail; reminds me of the rich young farmer (Luke 12:16-20); he was too self-confident.

2. Then James says, "all such rejoicing is evil" = hurtful; wicked; bad.

#### V. 17



1. "Therefore" = sums up the chapter and points out that we can sin by neglect as well as by deliberate action.
2. "Knoweth" = to have absolute knowledge of the facts--no doubt.
3. "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin" = it is sin to do something when you doubt whether it is right or not; also it is sin to know that a thing is right and yet to leave it undone--what we call the sin of omission.
4. May we heed the warnings, beware of our enemies, and stop doing those things that are wrong and practice those things that we know are right--so that we may be balanced in life and be blessed.
5. Just a word written by A.W. Pink to the lost who desire to be saved, "To live in known and allowed sin, and yet expect to be saved by Christ is the master deception of Satan."

## **CHAPTER 5:**

### **VII. Blessed are the balanced in action. V. 1-20**

-If your actions are right, then you are balanced. We want to look at five actions--one wrong and four right.

#### A. Wantonness--wrong. V. 1-6

1. "Wanton" = word found in verse 5; means to live luxuriously; lead a voluptuous life--to give one's self to pleasure.
2. Therefore, these 6 verses are addressed to the rich. Keep in mind that in those days, there was a great gulf between the rich and poor. The "middle class" as we know it today was not a major factor in society then. The same exist in Nigeria (I have seen that first hand) and is coming to America.
3. It seemed that the gospel appealed to the poor masses, while the rich (the majority) rejected Christ and oppressed the poor Christians. It is not a sin to be rich if you use your riches right. (I Tim. 6:10; Mat. 19:23-24) This is a warning of certain judgment that is sure to come on those who use riches wrongly.
4. This is not a plea to reform. It is written to the unsaved professors.
5. James lists four sins and shows that the rich are only preparing themselves for coming judgment.

#### 1. Hoarding. V. 1-3

##### V. 1

1. "Go to now" = a phrase designed to arrest attention, as if there were something that demanded their notice.
2. "Ye rich men" = those James address this section to.
3. "Weep and howl" = burst into weeping; howling with grief; "howl" means to wail; lament; loud cry; what about?:
4. "For your miseries" = hardship, trouble, calamities; refers to the sufferings which will take place in the time of travail during the "day of the Lord" when God's wrath will be

poured out on this earth--the vials, trumpets, and thunders of Revelations; also applies to times when rich men lose their wealth they had hoarded up; example: in the great depression (it has been stated that there were 250 less millionaires in the US in 1931 than in 1929) also known as black Tuesday--Oct. 1929.

5. "That shall come upon *you*" = such men expose themselves always to the wrath of God; therefore, they have a reason to weep and howl in anticipation of His vengeance.

6. There are three main sources of wealth and the description of the miseries given in verse 2-3.

### 1) Perishable commodities--corn, grain, and food substance. V. 2a

V. 2

1. "Riches" = abundance of external possessions.

2. "Corrupted" = to cause to rot; to destroy; the idea is that they had accumulated more than they needed for their own use and instead of distributing them to do good to others or using them in a useful way, they hoarded them up until they rotted or spoiled (I John 3:17); an example is given in Luke 12:16-20--one will have to face God; a suitable provision for the time to come cannot be forbidden--Joseph is an example for he stored up during the seven years of plenty to provide during the famine; but reference here is to cases where great quantities had been laid up, perhaps while the poor were suffering and which were kept until they became worthless; some might say to those who store things up, "Where is your faith?" The answer to them is found in Heb. 11:7.

### 2) Garments. V. 2b

3. "Garments" = the same idea just expressed is given here in another form; in the East, garments were considered a sign of wealth and were laid up for show or for future use (Gen. 45:22); garments were a status symbol.

4. "Motheaten" = means to be destroyed and become of no value either to look at or to wear (Mat. 6:19); the idea is that they had accumulated a great amount of this kind of property which was useless to them, and they kept it until it became destroyed.

### 3) Gold and silver. V. 3

V. 3

1. "Gold and silver" = refers to that they had heaped together by injustice and fraud, a large amount and have kept it from those to whom it is due. (verse 4)

2. "Is cankered" = properly means to rust over; to cover with rust; gold and silver will not rust as we know rust today, but silver does corrode and gold will tarnish and certain chemicals will cause gold and silver to deteriorate and be changed into other forms of lesser value; also if kept in a damp place they will become darker in color, resembling rust in appearance = "the rust of them" = "rust" denotes something sent out or emitted; refers to the dark discoloration which appears on gold and silver, when they have not been in use for a long time.

3. "Shall be a witness against you" = refers to the rust or discoloration shall bear testimony against you that the money is not used as it should be, either in paying those to whom it is due or in doing good to others--that will be a witness against you.

A. Witnesses your selfishness today--at present.

B. Will witness against you again at the judgment. Note what Jesus said in Mat. 6:19-21. (Ezk. 7:19)

4. "Shall eat your flesh as it were fire" = a metaphor meaning to devour or consume--the effect of having their riches destroyed would consume their very flesh; think about it--when the rich lose their wealth, nerves are on edge and many turn to drugs and alcohol; thus their body deteriorates and they can't function properly, thus ending up having premature death or suicide--flesh ate up.

5. "Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days" = to accumulate riches; you have heaped up treasure for your last days but really you will have a different kind of treasure than you expected in the last day--the day of judgment. (Rom. 2:5-6)

## 2. Stealing wages. V. 4

V. 4

1. While hoarding property (verses 2-3) he now states another form of their guilt--they had withheld what was due from the very laborers who had cultivated their fields, and to whose labor they were indebted for what they had.

2. "Behold" = listen to what I have to say.

3. "The hire" = dues paid for work; wages.

4. "Laborers" = usually the ones who works for hire.

5. "Reaped down your fields" = is used to denote labor in general and applies to all kind of labor in reaping.

6. "Kept back by fraud" = one word in the Greek; means to withhold by trickery; cheating; and intentional deception or dishonesty; this is a pitiful picture of earned wages kept back by rich Jews; applied to those who had slaves which was not right--to not pay rightful wages; also applied to freemen who were hired for a certain amount of wages and when pay day came they were shorted; it is right to honestly pay for an honest day's work--today we have a lot of problem with some giving an honest day's work.

7. The hire "crieth" = to cry out; cries out to God for justice and punishment; the voice of the wrong goes up to heaven; you have heard "money talks" but in this case stolen wages talked--cried out to God.

8. The laborers' cries "entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth" = Lord of the armies; the battle name for God; corresponds to "Lord of Host" = in the OT (Isa. 1:9); by using this phrase it implies that the Lord hears their cry and He will regard it and avenge them--in His own time He will come forth to vindicate the oppressed and punish the oppressor.

9. This sin is forbidden in the OT. (Deut. 24:14-15; Mal. 3:5)

## 3. Extravagant living. V. 5

V. 5

1. "Lived in pleasure" = be given to a soft and luxurious life; to indulge in luxury; Jesus warned that this would choke out the seed (Luke 8:14) lost or saved; yet God wants us to enjoy the blessings of life (I Tim. 6:17), but He does not want us to be wasteful and luxurious while robbing others in need.

2. "Been wanton" = to give one's self to pleasure; ye have lived in pleasure and have given yourself to it.
3. "Ye have nourished your hearts, as in the day of slaughter" = "nourished" means to fatten, thus James compares them to senseless cattle who are feeding themselves without restraint, care, or forethought that they are only being fattened up for the slaughter.
4. These are extravagant livers who live only to eat, drink, and enjoy life with no restraint, no care, no forethought that they are going to have to face God one day.
5. Wrong kind of action!

#### 4. Injustice. V. 6

##### V. 6

1. "Condemned" = to give judgment against one; to pronounce guilty (James 2:6); the rich controlled the courts of justice.
2. "Killed" = to commit murder, God called it murder, even though many of these justified their actions in their own mind.
3. "Just" = just one; refers to the righteous as a group--all; includes Jesus and all saints (Acts 2:22-23, 3:14-15, 7:52; Amos 2:6, 5:12); Paul was guilty of this (Acts 9:1-2); the evil man would gladly eliminate the just man for he reminds him of what he is and of what he ought to be.
4. "He doth not resist" = refers to the ones condemned and killed--the just; means he does not oppose and fight back when it was for the cause of Christ; Jesus did not (John 10:17-18) and He taught us in Mat. 5:38-46; verse 45 shows maturity if you do not resist for the cause of Christ--"children" is from the Greek word which means maturity--"huios."
5. The rich took advantage of their power to abuse and kill the poor, and these Christians did not resist. They left their case in the hands of a righteous judge. (Rom. 12:17-21) They did so by having right action--not by being wanton but by:

#### B. Waiting in patience--right. V. 7-11

##### V. 7

1. "Be patient" = to persevere patiently and bravely in enduring misfortunes and troubles; does not mean that we are to set idly by doing nothing, but carries the idea of endurance, bearing the burdens and fighting the battles until the Lord comes.
2. "Therefore" = refers to the wrong James had just described--stealing wages and injustice; even under these wrongs, endure--be patient = expresses the attitude of the mind which is content to wait; let this patience continue as long as it is needed even "unto the coming of the Lord" = then you will be released from suffering; two ways He may come:
  - A. For you in death. (II Cor. 5:8) An example is the three Hebrew boys in Dan. 3:16-18.
  - B. For you in the rapture. Until either one occurs be balanced in action by waiting.
3. Now James gives two illustrations to hammer home this lesson of patience--waiting.
  1. The farmer = "the husbandman" = tiller of the soil.

1. He "waiteth" = speaks of an eager expectation; to wait for; to watch for; to expect.
2. "The precious fruit of the earth" = valuable; dear to the farmer because of his toil for it.
3. James adds "hath long patience for it" = pictures the farmer longing and hoping over his precious crop all year long; his patience is not exhausted.
4. "It" = refers to the precious fruit of the earth.
5. "Until he receive the early and latter rain" = "he" is translated from a neuter gender Greek word, thus "it" receives, speaking of the earth not the farmer; this even describes the farmer's hopes and patience--until the earth receives both the early and latter rain.
6. "Early rain" = rain that comes in October-November; this revived the parched and thirsty soil and prepared it for the seed, so they could germinate--speaking of wheat and barley, their major crops.
7. "Latter rain" = rain that came in April and May for the maturing of the grain and filling out the grain so they could have an abundant harvest. (Joel 2:23)
8. All of this takes patience, waiting, and expectation.

#### V. 8

1. Now the application of verse 7.
2. "Ye" = the brethren to whom James addressed this epistle to; applies to all saints in any period of time.
3. "Also" = like as the farmers.
4. "Be patient" = do not let the opposition, trials, or circumstances get you down.
5. "Stablish your hearts" = to strengthen; make firm; let your purposes and your faith be firm and unwavering; do not become weary and fretful (Gal. 6:9); this takes study and prayer. (II Tim. 2:15; I Thess. 5:17; Mat. 6:6)
6. We will reap in this life by souls being saved. The early rain spiritually was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. And there is going to be the latter rain before He comes. (Zech. 10:1) Also there is the early rain on lost souls that allows the seed to germinate and the latter rain on lost souls that produces a harvest. We reap here (Gal. 6:9) and we will reap there. (II Tim. 4:7-8; II John 8) Therefore, be patient, stablish your hearts.
7. "For" = because.
8. "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh" = it is near; either the death angel or the rapture (Luke 21:28); therefore, bear with patience all that is laid upon you, until the time of your deliverance shall come.

#### V. 9

1. "Grudge not" = murmur not; groan not; complain not; this is a picture of being fretful and impatient; stop murmuring against one another as some were already doing; in view of the hope of the second coming, lift up your heads.
2. "Lest ye be condemned" = judged; because the judge standeth before the door" = is standing now; the judge is pictured as ready to enter for judgment.

3. Apparently the trials had made some of the Christians critical and they were complaining, however James reminds them and us that they are not to murmur, groan, and complain, because Christ, the Judge is at the door. He knows what is going on, and He will come quickly and make things right.

4. Wait on the Lord--be patient!

## 2. The prophets.

### V. 10

1. James refers to the OT prophets (one who foretold future events by inspiration) who suffered under the hands of sinners because they spoke "in the name of the Lord."

2. "Take for an example" = to copy under; to teach; means for the copy to be imitated; we are to imitate the prophets "of (their) suffering affliction, and of patience" = they showed how evils are to be borne.

3. The prophets were in general a much persecuted group of men. (Matt. 5:10-12) They showed much patience in their trials; therefore, they are a model and example for us.

### V. 11

1. "Behold" = listen very carefully to what James is going to say.

2. "Count happy" = one word in the Greek; to pronounce blessed.

3. "Which endure" = who bear bravely and calmly ill treatments; to persevere under misfortunes and trials; to hold fast to one's faith in Christ.

4. James is saying that we commend those who endure because they did what they ought to do and their name is honored and blessed.

5. James gives one example--Job.

A. "Ye have heard" = perhaps in the synagogues where the OT was read.

B. "Patience" = the quality of an individual that does not surrender to circumstances nor succumb to trials; Job did complain, but he refused to renounce God. (Job 13:15)

C. "Have seen" = to have absolute positive knowledge.

D. "The end of the Lord" = refers to the end which God brought about in the case of Job--he had twice as much as he had in the beginning. (Job 42:12)

E. "The Lord is very pitiful" = full of pity; very kind; extremely compassionate.

F. "Of tender mercy" = merciful and compassionate; the Lord had a wonderful purpose (end) in mind when He permitted Job to be tried, even though Job did not understand what God was doing.

6. Regardless of what trials may come in our lives, we know that God is full of love and mercy and that all things work together for good. (Rom. 8:28)

7. Just as He showed deep compassion in the case of Job, we have equal reason to suppose that He will in our case.

8. The prophets suffered, but they had patience and left their problems with God and won the victory.

9. Right action--waiting in patience till the coming of the Lord.

10. What is involved in waiting?

A. Watching. (I Peter 4:7)

B. Preparing:

a. Be sober = temperance = fruit of the Spirit. (I Peter 4:7)

b. Be blameless in body and in spirit. (I Thess. 5:23)

c. Put on the armor of light. (Rom. 13:11-14)

C. Be in fellowship. (I Peter 4:8-9)

D. Do not despair (I Peter 3:4), but have hope by looking. (Titus 2:13)

E. Be an encouragement to others. (Heb. 10:25)

F. Abide in Christ. (I John 2:28)

11. Be patient and stablish your hearts (verse 8) and you will be balanced in action and be blessed for Isa. 40:31 says so.

### C. Watching your speech--right. V. 12

V. 12

1. "But above all things" = but especially; be careful on this point; whatever else is done, let not this be.

2. "My brethren:"

A. "Brethren" = from the same womb--the womb of Holy Ghost conviction; therefore, James is referring to the saved.

B. "My" = James who referred to himself as being saved the same way every saint is saved--by grace through faith in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. "Swear not" = to promise with an oath; the Greek means stop it if you are, and do not start if you are not--prohibition; watch your speech.

A. We usually think to swear means to curse, means to take God's name in vain. This is one type of swearing and it ought not be. (Exo. 20:7) "Vain" applies to using the Lord's name lightly or without thinking. Such as saying "God," "Jesus," or expressions as "Gee" which is a form of Jesus and even the phrase "bless God" used by preachers in a legalistic way; however we do it without thinking.

B. This refers in context to your speech as a whole, your words, not just talking about a court of law, but daily statements. (We should not swear in a court of law either.) He is telling us to have such honest speech that we do not have to always "back up" our promise with an oath.

C. "Neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath" = James probably had Mat. 5:33-37 in mind; our word ought to be our bond always--"let your yea be yea; and *your* nay, nay" = people use the phrase, "This is the truth" as if to say I do not always tell the truth.

D. Men swear daily, countless of times and then swear that they did not swear. "I swear" = they say. Some say "I'll stake my life on it." Swear not--watch your speech. (James 1:19)

4. Balance in action by watching.

5. "Lest ye fall into condemnation" = judgment; in verse 9b James states "behold, the judge standeth before the door" and He hears everything and judges rightly.

6. Therefore watch!--right action.

#### D. Worshiping when trials come--right. V. 13-18

##### V. 13

1. "Is any among you afflicted" = "afflicted" is from a Greek word which refers to suffering evil of any kind; to undergo hardships; can apply to being afflicted by sickness, bereavement, disappointment, persecutions, and loss of health or property.

2. "Let him pray" = the tense means continuous praying--let him keep on praying instead of cursing; many afflictions are trials that are specifically planned by God; one of the designs of affliction is to lead us to the throne of grace; James does not promise that God will remove the affliction, but does suggest that God will give grace necessary to endure the trials--Paul is an example. (II Cor. 12:9)

3. "Is any merry" = word means to have the mind well, that is to have it happy or free from trouble; to be cheerful; one's mind can be well and he can be cheerful in the midst of trials. (Rom. 5:3; this one can do if his mind is well.)

4. "Let him sing psalms"= means to celebrate the praises of God in song. (Psa. 40:1-3; some say I've got a song in my heart, but it has to be in your mouth to be seen by others.)

##### V. 14

1. "Is any among you sick" = refers to any kind of illness.

2. "Let him call for the elders of the church" = "elders" refers to the pastors (Titus 1:5); qualifications for an elder is found in Titus 1:6-9; Titus 1:5 calls them elders while Titus 1:7 calls them bishops; elder, bishop, and pastor all designate the same office with elder referring to the man while pastor and bishop refers to the function of the office; in Bible days all churches had more than one elder; therefore, James says of the sick, call the elders and let them pray "over" him--with him and for him.

3. In verse 13 James says for the individual to pray for himself and now he says call the elders to pray. Why? Because the one who is sick is less able to pray for himself than the one in other forms of affliction--he could have so much fever and be so weak that he would have trouble even thinking straight so as to word a prayer.

4. Also "anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." There are some note worthy things here:

A. Let the sick call for the elders says two things.

1) The sick had faith in God, prayer, and the man of God.

2) This was not a public service--not some ceremony.

B. "Anointing" = does not mean to anoint in ceremonial fashion, but means to rub the oil on as a medicine.

C. "Oil" = refers to olive oil for its use was one of the best medicinal agents known to the ancients; they used it externally and internally; the apostles used it (Mark 6:13);



oil was a common medicine in Bible days; doctors often massaged the sick with oil (Ex. the Samaritan in Luke 10:34); a great medicinal value is attached to the use of oil--applies to using medicine today; Isaiah took a lump of figs and laid it on Hezekiah's boil and he recovered. (Isa 38:2)

D. This was to be done "in the name of the Lord" = refers to Jesus and means by His authority or by His direction; this was an act in accordance with His will; in Acts 3:6 Peter did not heal this man but the Lord did.

## V. 15

E. "And the prayer of faith shall save the sick" = emphasis is placed on the worth of prayer; the prayer of faith delivers (makes well, restores to health) the sick:

- 1) There is no divine healer (human) here.
- 2) There is no public healing service here.
- 3) This is not forbidding using medicines and doctors here.
- 4) But even medicine did not deliver him.

F. "And the Lord shall raise him up" = a precious promise, not for a professional "faith-healer" who scoffs at medicine and makes merchandise out of prayer; God uses doctors, nurses, medicine, and hospitals but the Lord only is the great Physician; He only raises up the sick and that is in answer to "the prayer of faith" = means a prayer offered in faith or in the exercise of confidence in God; this can only be done when one has the mind of God. (Heb. 11:2)

G. "And if he have committed sins" = refers to sins that caused the sickness (I Cor. 11:30); not all sickness is directly due to sin in a person's life (John 9:1-3); when the man spoken of here was healed then it would be evidence that the sins that caused the sickness was forgiven.

H. "They shall be forgiven him" = this is not done without repentance, not without a change of heart and turning back to the Lord in restored fellowship; this involves confession. (I John 1:9)

## V. 16

1. "Confess *your* faults one to another" = "confess" means to acknowledge openly your "faults" = a sin; misdeed; a lapse or deviation from truth and uprightness; this is referring to open sin that was public; means to say the same thing about it as God does--it is sin; this does not mean to give all the specific details of your sin--those who know, know, and those who don't know, don't need to know.

2. "Pray one for another" = this is part of the armor (Eph. 6:18) and is a strong weapon. (II Cor. 10:4-5)

3. "That ye may be healed" = confession and prayer for sins which cause sickness are necessary for healing to come; sickness, sometimes, is God's way of getting one to recognize his sin; it may be chastisement.

4. "Effectual fervent" = one word in the Greek; refers to that which has power; which in its own nature is fitted to produce an effect; it is the kind of prayer that is not listless but earnest, sincere, hearty, persevering.

5. "Righteous man" = one with right standing with God--sonship and fellowship.

6. "Avaieth much" = is strong; prevails; indicates the idea of strength or power that overcomes and secures the object.

7. Note: the success of the prayer does not depend on man's talent, learning, rank, wealth, or office but on the fact he is "righteous."

#### V. 17

1. Now James gives an example: "Elias" = the common way of writing "Elijah" in the NT.

2. He was "subject to like passions as we are" = means he had a nature like any other man.

3. "He prayed earnestly that it might not rain" = he had the mind of God--knew God's will and told King Ahab so (I Kings 17:1); and it did not rain for "three years and six months."

#### V. 18

1. "And he prayed again" = it is not mentioned that he prayed the fire of God to fall and consume the sacrifice he offered. (I Kings 18:30-38)

2. Now he mentioned Elijah praying for rain and it rained. (I Kings 18:42-45) This was a man of like passion as we are and God heard him and answered his prayer because he was praying according to the will of God.

3. Therefore, we need to have the right action by worshiping which includes:

A. Praying for self.

B. Singing praises unto him.

C. Praying for the sick.

D. Confessing our sin to others.

E. Praying for one another.

4. If a person practices these things, he will be balanced in his actions.

#### E. Witnessing--right action. V. 19-20

#### V. 19

1. "Brethren" = those who profess to be saved to whom James was writing; those from the same womb of Holy Ghost conviction; refers to the saved of any period of time.

2. "If any of you do err from the truth" = to be lead astray from the right way--truth.

3. "And one convert him" = to influence to return; to bring back; to turn back again; Peter was an example (Luke 22:31-32); for this to occur that person must be right with God--your life must match your lip. (Gal. 6:1)

#### V. 20

1. This verse shows the outcome of the one God uses to "convert" the erring one.

2. "Let him know" = means to know by experience.

3. "That he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death" = to rescue him from the discipline of God. (I John 5:16)
4. And in love "shall hide a multitude of sins" = (I Peter 4:8); in love he shall see his sins covered; "hide" means to be pardoned by God, because he had to confess them before he will be converted.
5. The basic meaning of these verses is that saints should seek to bring wandering brethren back to the Lord and could be applied to the lost--destruction and misery.
6. We can be so wrapped up in our own trials that we forget the needs of the brethren who have strayed and the lost.
7. Therefore, we need to be balanced in action by waiting with patience, watching, worshiping, and witnessing. If these actions are practiced, then we can be balanced and blessed--happy is that man.

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